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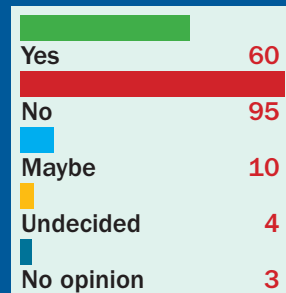
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POLL RESULTS

Do you support re-evaluating the CNMI's political relationship with the United States?



Sunday, January 12, 2014

INSIDE

NATION



A man describes finding the wreckage of his brother's plane.

► **PAGE 15**

WORLD



Former Israel prime minister Ariel Sharon dies at 85.

► **PAGE 17**

LIFE & STYLE



Red Hot Chili Peppers will join Bruno Mars at Super Bowl.

► **PAGE 21**

Mariana House sold for \$900K-plus

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos said the Mariana House in Washington, D.C. has been “pretty much sold” to a real estate firm for over \$900,000, after years of sitting idle since it stopped being the official residence of the CNMI’s resident representative to the nation’s capital in 2009. The CNMI bought the property for \$250,000 to \$300,000.

See **MARIANA** on **Page 4**

CHC nursing director resigns; nursing shortfall at 44

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

After two years as nursing director of the Commonwealth Health Center, Leticia Reyes has left the position for undisclosed reasons. *Saipan Tribune* learned this from hospital employees who asked not to be identified.

It was learned that Reyes last reported for work on Dec. 24, 2013, days ahead of the

expiration of her contract this month. She tendered her resignation with Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. interim CEO Esther Muña, who declined to comment on the issue when asked Friday.

Reyes was hired at the hospital in January 2012 during the term of former CEO Juan N. Babauta. She was tasked to oversee the nursing department’s over 200 staff, including ancillary services personnel.

See **CHC** on **Page 4**



HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH

Gov. Eloy S. Inos, foreground right, speaks to law enforcement personnel and advocates during Friday morning’s signing of a proclamation declaring January 2014 Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The governor says combating human trafficking in the CNMI and in the Pacific Region needs awareness of its harsh realities and collaborative mobilization to end it.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

See story
on **Page 5**

CNMI control of submerged lands may be limited to 9 islands for now

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The CNMI could end up controlling the 3-mile submerged lands around only nine of its 14 islands—at least in the foreseeable future—because three are part of a national marine monument that still doesn’t have a co-management

agreement and two are leased to the U.S. Department of Defense.

This, as the CNMI awaits President Barack Obama’s proclamation transferring control over submerged lands to the CNMI.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos, in an interview Friday, said his understanding is that the three northernmost islands—Farallon de

Pajaros, Maug, and Asuncion—would be exempted from the transfer of control until a co-management agreement has been finalized.

Such co-management agreement has not been drafted five years since a 2009 presidential proclamation creating the marine monument.

“I think we’re fine with that except

we’d like some finality on the co-management agreement,” Inos said, referring to a specific timeline for the co-management deal so that the CNMI could also have control of the submerged lands on the three islands.

Tinian and Farallon de Mendinilla, under lease to the U.S. military, are also

See **ISLANDS** on **Page 4**

CNMI pays tribute to former Guam delegate. PAGE 3
225 Guam Guard soldiers arriving today in Guam. PAGE 13

Local

Manglona: Jorgensen should be commended

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Bruce Jorgensen, the original lawyer of Betty Johnson, should be commended for taking the risk as the singular attorney in the CNMI who litigated the novel and difficult NMI Retirement Fund issues, according to Sen. Paul A. Manglona.

In an affidavit he issued on Nov. 22, 2013, that Jorgensen attached to his petition for attorney's fees and costs, Manglona said the results obtained by virtue of Jorgensen's sole willingness to undertake the Fund litigation have been exceptional to

the benefit of thousands of Fund beneficiaries and the CNMI public.

Manglona said that between October 1986 and February 1988, Jorgensen was employed by the CNMI on Rota as legal counsel to his father, Prudencio T. Manglona, who was then the mayor of the island.

Manglona cited that for a span of three months lapsing in August 1986, a contractual agreement was effected pursuant to which Jorgensen agreed

to provide legal services to him in his official Senate capacity.

Manglona said that Jorgensen provided those services, on a part-time basis, as a sole-source independent contractor exempted from both standing and benefits of a CNMI full-time or civil service employee.

The senator said he was astonished to learn that CNMI officials have submitted pleadings claiming that Jorgensen, by virtue of their prior contractual agreement, is and has been a so-

called "inactive" member of the Retirement Fund.

Manglona pointed out that their prior contractual agreement excluded Jorgensen from being a Fund member and thereby precluded him from receiving Fund benefits.

"Likewise, I was astonished to learn that Fund officials reputedly had placed and carried Mr. Jorgensen's name on the Fund's books, either recently or previously, as a supposedly 'inactive' Fund member, when neither I nor Mr. Jorgensen had until recently been apprised of this contention," he added.

Manglona said the mere fact

that Jorgensen's name being on a list generated by CNMI or Fund official should not make him a Fund member or a class member in the Fund litigation.

"I do not believe that Mr. Jorgensen is eligible for any Fund benefits, regardless of Mr. Jorgensen's age, given that he received short-term contract payments from the CNMI for less than what I understand to be the requisite three-year durational

minimum," he said.

Manglona noted that it is common knowledge within the CNMI that at the outset of the Fund litigation more than four years ago, and for years afterwards, none of the many CNMI-situated lawyers expressed a willingness to litigate the matter on behalf of Fund retiree-beneficiaries.

"Mr. Jorgensen was the sin-

See **JORGENSEN** on Page 4

New law expands protection for domestic violence victims

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos signed two public laws and one local law on Friday, including one that provides work-related protection to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and teen dating violence.

The governor also signed a public law allowing the use of certain nets for fishing on Rota and a local law renaming the Kagman fire station on Saipan.

Inos signed Rep. George Camacho's (R-Saipan) House Bill 18-82, House Draft 1 or the Anti-Violence Leave Act of 2013, into Public Law 18-31, recognizing that the current Family Medical Leave Act does not provide heightened regulations needed to offer victims work-related protection.

Under the new law, an employer may not discharge, discriminate, or retaliate against an employee who is a victim of domestic violence or sexual as-

sault while the victim is trying to comply with court orders or subpoenas, or for taking time off from work to seek a temporary restraining order or any other relief to help ensure the victim or the victim's children's health, safety, and welfare.

As a condition of taking time off, the employee shall give the employer a reasonable advance notice, unless the advance notice is not feasible.

When an unscheduled absence occurs, the employer shall not take any action against the employee if the employee—within a reasonable time after the absence—provides a certification to the employer.

The certification shall be in the form of any of the following: a police report indicating that the employee was a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault; a court order protect-

ing or separating the employee from the perpetrator or other evidence from the court or prosecuting attorney that the employee has appeared in court; documentation from a medical professional, social worker, domestic violence advocate, health care provider, or counselor that the employee was undergoing treatment as a result of domestic violence or sexual assault.

To the extent allowed by law, "the employer shall maintain the confidentiality of any employee requesting leave" under the new law.

Any employee discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, discriminated, or retaliated against for taking time off from work "shall be entitled to reinstatement and reimbursement for lost wages and work benefits" caused by

» **As the only CNMI-situated lawyer who litigates Fund issues**

» **Governor also OKs renaming of Kagman fire station, use of some fishing nets on Rota**

Judge to parties in Johnson's suit: Keep working with Faris

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood has ordered the parties in the Betty Johnson class action to keep working with Hawaii chief bankruptcy judge Robert Faris in hopes of resolving the petitions for attorneys' fees and costs.

Tydingco-Gatewood also vacated the status hearing in Johnson's case set for today, Monday.

The Guam-based Civile & Tang law firm, through its principal representative, attorney Joyce C. H. Tang, was supposed to present today an update on the status of the settlement fund that was created under the settlement agreement in Johnson's class action. The CNMI government was also supposed to report on its compliance with the terms of the settlement agreement.

The other agenda at the status hearing pertains to the petitions for attorneys' fees

and costs filed by different lawyers who served as counsels for Johnson.

Tydingco-Gatewood cancelled today's scheduled status hearing after holding a chamber telephone conference on Thursday afternoon with the parties.

According to the minutes of the chamber conference, Tydingco-Gatewood discussed with the parties the possibility of submitting a unified attorneys' fees petition. The parties agreed to work on a unified submission, if possible.

The judge then vacated the status conference and instead set a telephone conference for Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2014, at 8:15 Guam date and time.

Tydingco-Gatewood did not rule on the petition for attorneys' fees and costs by Johnson counsels at the final fairness hearing last September. Instead, she directed the lawyers and the CNMI government to talk about the issue before Faris, who presided over the settlement discussions in Johnson's class action.



A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.



7th Annual Marianas Coffee Trail Run January 25, 2013

The 7th Annual Marianas Coffee Trail Run returns on Jan. 25, 2014, featuring some of the most scenic trails in Saipan. The long and short courses take participants through a variety of Saipan's island ecosystems, from the flat coastal areas of Garapan where the race begins, through the foothills of Mt. Tapochao, and on up and around Tapochao peak itself, before heading back down again to the finish. Incredible vistas of the Saipan lagoon, rich tropical jungle flora and fauna, and both the wild coffee plantations of the Japanese colonial period, and the newer plantations of the Marianas Coffee Company, are just a few of the highlights to be had along this challenging course.

Start time is 6:30 a.m. Registration forms for the event are available at the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) office in San Jose or online under the Events Calendar at www.mymarianas.com. Late registration can be made on the day of the race at American Memorial Park at 5:30 a.m. Registration fees are \$10.00 for children ages 12 and under, \$15.00 for athletes ages 13-18 years old, and \$25.00 for participants ages 19 and older. A late registration fee of an additional \$10.00 will apply after Thursday, Jan. 23, 2013. Walkers are encouraged to participate in the 10K short course.

Awards will be presented for first, second, and third place in male and female divisions. All participants will receive a finisher's t-shirt, certificate of participation, Marianas Coffee, and an invitation to the awards banquet following the race at the Micro Beach Pavilion at 11:30 a.m.

Joining the MVA and Marianas Coffee Company as race co-sponsors are KFC Triathlon Club Japan, TEAM PDI, and Northern Marianas Athletics. For more information on the Marianas Coffee Trail Run, contact Ed Diaz at the MVA at telephone 670-664-3200/1 or via email at ediaz@mymarianas.com.

CNMI pays tribute to former Guam delegate

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) extended the CNMI's condolences to the people of Guam on the passing last week of their former delegate to Congress, Vicente "Ben" Garrido Blaz, a World War II survivor and the first Chamorro to become a brigadier general in the U.S. military. He was 85.

Juan N. Babauta, a former

CNMI governor and former CNMI resident representative to Washington, D.C., also shared Blaz's untiring support for the CNMI.

Sablan read a statement for the Congressional Record recognizing Blaz as a "trail-blazer for all the Chamorros of the Mariana Islands, being the first of us ever to rise to the rank of general officer in the

U.S. Armed Forces."

Blaz served as Guam's second delegate for eight years, from the 99th through the 102nd Congresses.

Sablan said Blaz often looked out for the interests of the people of the Northern Marianas, at a time when the CNMI was without congressional representation. Sablan joined Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo for

a tribute and moment of silence in honor of Blaz.

"Our deepest sympathies go out to his family and to the people of Guam as they mourn the passing of General Ben Garrido Blaz," Sablan said.

Babauta, in a phone interview, remembers with fondness Blaz's contributions to CNMI causes. He said Blaz worked closely with him when he was resident representative to D.C. He also extends his deepest condolences to the Blaz family and the people of Guam.

"Congressman Blaz was

very courteous and helpful regarding CNMI issues. One thing I remember vividly, he supported the CNMI in keeping its CIP [capital improvement project] Covenant 702 funding. He did that because he recognized how the CNMI needed to continue to improve its infrastructure for us to keep our economy. He supported the CNMI position when it comes to military issues. I'm very grateful for all his support for the people of the CNMI, knowing very well he's the representing the people of

Guam first and foremost," Babauta told *Saipan Tribune*.

Blaz was elected in 1984 to serve the first of four terms as a member of U.S. Congress representing Guam.

Bordallo earlier said Blaz was "a distinguished individual whose wartime experience, knowledge, and passion for Chamorro history made him a great role model throughout generations." (*Haidee V. Eugenio*)

Ex-convict nabbed for allegedly using illegal drugs

Federal agents arrested on Friday Ryan T. Babauta, a man who is on federal probation after serving a prison term for joining a group of prisoners in a hostage drama at the Department of Corrections in 2009, this time for allegedly violating the terms of his probation, including using illegal drugs several times.

Babauta was served with an arrest warrant and taken to the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Friday afternoon.

At the hearing, Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy ordered Babauta's continued detention pending a revocation hearing on Thursday, Jan. 16, at 3pm.

Kennedy cited the seriousness of the original charges in this case and the violations alleged in the petition for revocation, including Babauta leaving his residence without informing his probation officer, and with his being on supervised release only since September 2013.

Babauta was remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

At the hearing, Babauta, through court-appointed counsel David Banes, waived the preliminary examination hearing and asked for the revocation hearing to be set at a later date.

Assistant U.S. attorney Rami Badawy asked Babauta's continued detention pending the revocation hearing.

Banes disclosed that Babauta's parents are willing to serve as third-party custodians.

The U.S. Probation Office asked the court last week to issue a warrant for Babauta to appear to explain why his term of release should not be revoked. The court granted the request

and issued the arrest warrant.

U.S. Probation Officer Gregory F. Arriola said that Babauta admitted to using methamphetamine or "ice" on Nov. 6 and 17, 2013. Arriola said the defendant further admitted using "ice" and marijuana on Dec. 4, 2013.

Babauta, Arriola said, also failed to give advance notice to his probation officer before changing residence and that Babauta failed to appear for his counseling sessions and random drug testing.

Babauta was among six prisoners who staged a 14-hour hostage drama at DOC in Susupe in March 2009. At the time, he was serving a prison term for involuntary manslaughter over the killing of a Bangladeshi national in Chalan Kanoa.

In August 1999 the federal court slapped Babauta with 180-month prison sentence and five years of supervised release, for hostage taking and felon in possession of a firearm. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Group picks local Girl Scouts as its community service project

Soroptimist International Northern Mariana Islands has picked the Girls Scouts of the CNMI as its first community service project.

The local Girl Scouts organization, which was revived a couple of years ago, was chosen by the local chapter of Soroptimist International so that it can equip its members with a positive self-image growing up.

"It's absolutely necessary for our young girls to grow up with a positive self-image. Young girls with good self-esteem grow into strong mothers and providers, and pave the future as role models for other young girls," said Soroptimist president Jill Arenovski.

She said their project will help members of Girls Scouts of the CNMI in two ways: First, Soroptimist volunteers will aid them with the project, showing them that they are worthy of time and attention, that strangers care about their futures, and that helping each other is the

foundation for the future of all women. Second, Soroptimist will make a small scrapbook for the Girls Scouts of the CNMI to hold memories of their Girl Scouting adventures. Arenovski said the first page/section will be titled "About Me."

"Our volunteers will work with each girl to select the attributes and values that each of them holds and make those words into a fun and meaningful page. The words (like helpful, considerate, kind, funny, outgoing, shy...) will help them see their own good attributes and will reinforce their good behaviors as they fill in the rest of the book."

Arenovski said the tentative date for this community project with the Girls Scouts of the CNMI is Sunday, Jan. 19.

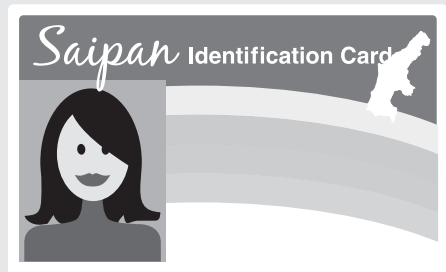
For more information about Soroptimist International Northern Mariana Islands, contact Arenovski at 287-9395 or sinorthernmarianaislands@soroptimist.net. (*Mark Rabago*)

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Docomo to serve as major sponsor of 'Pusong Pinoy'

The 2014 Pusong Pinoy celebration on Feb. 16 will have Docomo Pacific as its major sponsor after the telecommunications company donated \$5,000 to the United Filipino Organization last month.

UFO president Annamae Adaza again thanked Docomo and its general manager, James Nelson, for the generous cash donation to the group.

"Once again, Docomo Pacific is the major sponsor of 2014 UFO Pusong Pinoy. It's the

third year that we will celebrate the month of hearts but this time we involve the kids by having the Little Miss Pusong Pinoy beauty pageant. It's not a money contest; they are all competing based on beauty and brains," she said.

UFO has also finalized the venue for the 2014 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy after the group chose the Royal Taga Hall of the

Saipan World Resort to host the pageant, also on Feb. 16, from 6pm to 10pm.

"World Resort is a good venue since we needed a bigger place for the pageant. It's also good timing that

Monday is a holiday [President's Day]."

A total of 20 candidates will be vying for the 2014 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy tiara. The

competition is open to girls 6-9 years old with at least one parent who is 100-percent Filipino.

While the original deadline for applicants for the pageant is Jan. 15, Adaza said they cut short its duration because they already reached their full complement of 20 candidates.

Candidates will be competing for Best in Talent and Best in Evening Gown. Special awards include Miss Photogenic, Star of the Night, Miss Congeniality, and Darling of the Crowd.

Prizes at stake are \$800 for first place, \$500 for second place, \$300 for third place, and \$100 for fourth place. All candidates will also receive certificates of participation and gift packs.

Adaza said UFO will be assessing a \$1 entrance fee for the 2014 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy, which entitles ticket-holders to

join a raffle. She assured that everyone will go home with a prize from the raffle.

UFO is still looking for more donors and sponsors. For more details, call or text Adaza at 483-5237, UFO secretary Mario Mayuga at 285-1021, event director Ernie Molina at 789-8212, or Ester Sablan at 789-5553. **(Mark Rabago)**

'Guam war claims, Faleomavaega health won't hold up omnibus territories bill'

WASHINGTON D.C. (Pacific News Center)—Delegate Greg Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) says a gentlemen's agreement will keep the Omnibus Territories Act moving through Congress, despite controversy over Guam war claims and the hospitalization of American Samoa Delegate Eni Faleomavaega.

Faleomavaega's office is saying nothing about his condition, after the long-time delegate from American Samoa was medivaced last October to Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, and later, reportedly to a facility in Utah.

Sources here say he needs "major rehabilitation." Local media speculate he may have suffered a stroke, and Faleomavaega's office has not refuted that.

But Sablan says that, and Senate GOP objections to the cost of Guam war claims in the Omnibus Territories Act voted out of Senate Energy last month, shouldn't stop the bill.

"There's always been a 'gentlemen's agreement' that when we started this effort, that if one part, if a piece of the legislation is going to hold up the entire legislation, then there's a gentlemen's agreement that we could remove that sticking point. And so, the bill would move forward," Sablan said.

Sablan says Faleomavaega, Guam's Madeleine Bordallo, and the other delegates are all on board with that, though when asked if Guam war claims could be "pulled," Sablan said, "If we were to stick

to the agreement, yes."

He said he, Bordallo, and Virgin Island's Donna Christensen will talk more about strategy this week.

As for Faleomavaega, "I continue to keep Congressman Faleomavaega, Eni and his family, in my prayers. We would, of course, let his office know that we're having a meeting and invite someone from his office to join us in the meeting," said Sablan.

Sablan sees momentum behind the Omnibus Bill that would also extend the transitional Commonwealth-only worker program for five years, require an energy action plan for the islands and waive local matching requirements for small grants, as well as require

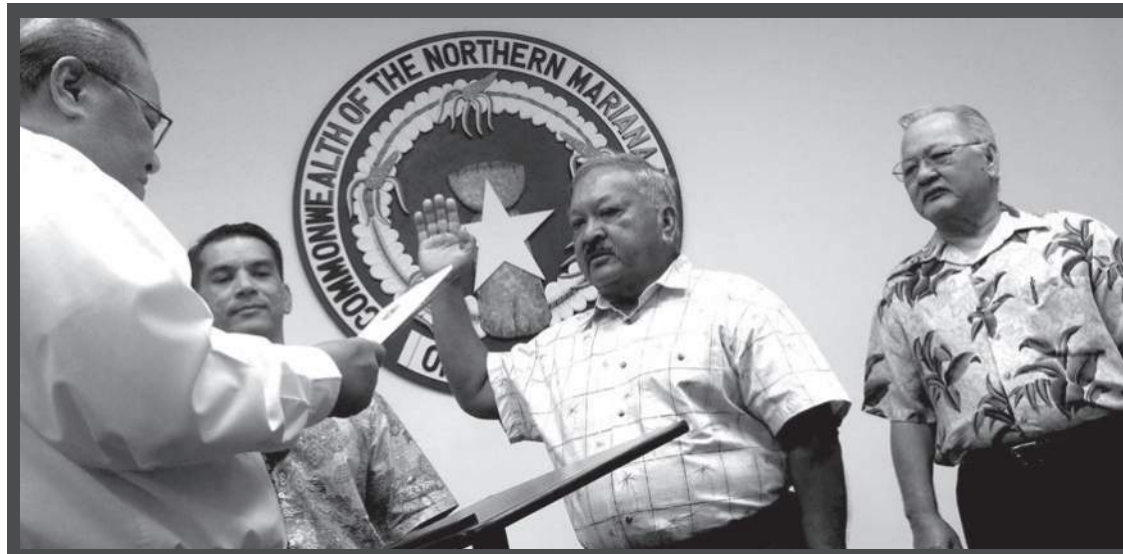
preference for Guam U.S. citizens over legal aliens for housing aid.

But Sablan says there are also hurdles in the house, including Natural Resources chair Doc Hastings.

"In the past, Doc Hastings has said there's nothing Omnibus. He just doesn't agree with Omnibus. But yesterday, he said, I asked him, if the Senate bill were to come down here, would he consider it. And he was open to it."

Sablan suggests Hastings would not take up a companion bill in the House committee; it would have to originate in the Senate.

But the question now is, what will the bill look like, if and when, it comes out of the Senate.



NEW BOARD MEMBER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos, left, administers the oath of office Friday morning to Ignacio Perez, second from right, to serve on the Commonwealth Development Authority board of director representing Tinian. Looking on are Perez's son Allen and CDA executive director Manny Sablan, right.

HAIDE V. EUGENIO

MARIANA

From Page 1

"It's pretty much sold; we're just doing the closing documents right now... I believe the selling price, the appraised value of the property is \$942,000," the governor said in an interview at a signing of a proclamation Friday morning declaring January 2014 Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

The administration listed the property, located at 2121 R Street NW Washington, D.C., last year.

At the time, its appraised value was between \$800,000 and \$1 million.

Senate floor leader Ray Yumul (Ind-Saipan), who has long been suggesting selling the property, said yesterday the "longer we had waited to decide the fate of the Mariana House,

the higher the cost of maintenance of the property because it's idle and lacks occupancy."

"Considering the fact that we paid so much less for it back in the '80s, the CNMI still got a good return on our investment," Yumul told *Saipan Tribune*.

The governor said he would report the sales proceeds to the Legislature, along with any new additional revenue that will constitute a supplemental budget.

As what lawmakers suggested, the governor would set aside most, if not all, of the sale proceeds to the Retirement Fund settlement fund.

The governor said the real estate firm that bought the Mariana House is expected to develop the property and then sell it.

For years, the Fitial administration—and later the Inos administration—has been weighing whether to lease or sell the Mariana House.

Taking into consideration the property tax and maintenance costs involved in keeping the property, as well as the CNMI government's dire need to raise revenues, the administration decided to sell the Mariana House.

Lawmakers have been supportive of selling the property, so long as the proceeds will be dedicated to the government's obligations to the Retirement Fund.

Rep. Tony Sablan (Ind-Saipan), for example, said earlier that the CNMI can't afford to allow Mariana House to deteriorate and lose its value. He said renovating the property could cost \$200,000 to \$300,000 so that it could be priced higher. But he said even if the CNMI renovates the property, there's no guarantee it can sell it at a much higher price. He said the faster the CNMI gets rid of the property, the better.

Jim Stump, the governor's counsel, is overseeing the sale.

The Marianas House was bought decades ago to be used by the office of the CNMI's resident representative to Washington, D.C. It has been sitting idle since 2009 when the resident representative's office was abolished to give way to the CNMI's first nonvoting delegate to the U.S. Congress as a result of Public Law 110-229, the same law that placed local immigration under federal control. Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), the CNM's first and so far only delegate to Congress, never used the property.

In 2011, the Fitial administration planned to lease the Mariana House. But at the time, before the administration could lease out the property, it said it will have to repair the building and clear it of a rat infestation, as complained by a neighbor.

CHC

From Page 1

When asked for comment, CHC hospital services director Jesse Tudela confirmed Reyes' exit but said he is unaware of the content of the resignation letter because it was directly submitted to the CEO's office. He maintained, however, that it is business as usual at the hospital.

Named acting nursing director is Mildred Keller.

According to Tudela, CHC is now in the process of hiring Reyes' replacement. In fact, he drafted a memorandum indicating the critical need to fill the post as soon as possible. A job vacancy announcement for the position is upcoming, he said.

As of Friday, the corporation has a total of 181 nurses, including at the clinics on Rota and Tinian, Tudela said.

To fill the 225 FTEs for nurses it is authorized to hire this fiscal year, the corporation will need to employ 44 more nurses. "That's the figure that we

need [225 nurses], so essentially we need to hire 44 more nurses of which majority are needed at CHC," Tudela said.

He is optimistic that once the corporation is able to hire more personnel from outside the CNMI, critical vacancies will be filled not only at the nursing department but all medical professionals needed on the island.

Tudela said that getting experienced nurses is among their priorities. He reiterated that not too many nurses or related professionals can be found on the island.

Despite the lack of manpower in some units of the hospital, Tudela said the corporation has been successful in addressing the deficiencies identified by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services during a September 2012 survey.

As of Friday, the federal health agency has yet to issue a decision on the survey. "We're still trying to meet all deficiencies and concerns and we're awaiting CMS response to our report so we can do the necessary corrections," added Tudela.

JORGENSEN

From Page 2

gular attorney then willing to expend the time, effort, labor, and costs necessary to skillfully litigate the novel and difficult legal issues necessitated not only by pertinent Fund issues then at hand but, equally important, the foreknowledge and recognition four years ago that, even then, time was of utmost essence given the Fund's perilous fiscal condition," he said.

Manglona's affidavit was among the exhibits Jorgensen submitted in federal court last week to support his petition for attorney's fees and costs.

According to the Office of

the Attorney General, Jorgensen is potentially a Fund plan member and thus may be barred from being class counsel in Johnson's suit.

Former Fund administrator Lillian M. Pangelinan disclosed in her declaration that as an employee of the Legislative Bureau, Jorgensen began contributing to the Fund in January 1996 up until August 1996.

Since then, Pangelinan said, Jorgensen's membership status has been—and currently is—"inactive."

Jorgensen is seeking at least \$18.6 million in attorney's fees and costs. The OAG strongly opposed the petition, describing it as "excessive and outrageous."

'Ending human trafficking starts with everyone's grasp of its harsh realities'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With local and regional partners as witnesses, Gov. Eloy S. Inos signed a proclamation Friday morning declaring January 2014 Human Trafficking Awareness Month to help drive the point that ending human trafficking begins with awareness of its harsh realities and then taking collaborative action.

Vigilance and reporting to authorities any suspicion of human trafficking goes a long way in helping combat the problem.

"Human trafficking is a severe crime that deprives and violates victims of their fundamental human dignity. It is a global issue, and all local and federal law enforcement, social service, medical, victim advocacy, educational, and other related organizations must work together to effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and protect victims," the governor said in his proclamation.

The governor said the CNMI remains committed to protecting individual freedoms and ensuring the elimination of human trafficking.

Human trafficking is described as early or forced marriages, commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, labor obtained through debt bondage, involuntary servitude, slavery, and slavery by descent.

While victims are of every

age, race, gender and nationality, the majority are women and children.

"Most victims have been abused, threatened and restrained to a point of being powerless to free themselves. Our vigilance is crucial to rescuing those held captive," Inos said.

Unlike other crimes such as drug trafficking in which a person sells the drugs only once, human traffickers sell victims "over and over again."

Friday's proclamation signing also came two days before National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, observed on Jan. 11.

In the CNMI, human trafficking cases continue to be investigated and prosecuted, even as the U.S. State Department released its 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report tagging the CNMI as a "destination and transit location for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking." The problem is also present in other Micronesian islands, as the State Department report indicated.

CNMI Attorney General Joey Patrick San Nicolas, at the signing on Capital Hill, thanked everyone "who, one way or another, have worked to help end human trafficking."

San Nicolas said the coalition to address human trafficking will have a booth at the Jan. 23 Garapan Street Market

to help drum up awareness about human trafficking, along with presentations at Northern Marianas College.

Assistant U.S. attorney Rami Badawy, echoing San Nicolas' statement, said investigating and prosecuting human trafficking requires a collaborative effort from everyone.

"These are some of the most difficult cases to actually bring into a court setting. It requires not only law enforcement, not only the prosecutor, but also non-profit [groups], victim advocates...to bring these cases to light and do what we are here to do—justice for the most vulnerable victims, women and children, and put traffickers [away]. Events like this proclamation raise awareness. Out of awareness can we really begin the process," Badawy said.

On behalf of U.S. Attorney Alicia Limtiaco, Badawy thanked the governor for signing the proclamation and all the other partners in addressing human trafficking in the CNMI and the region.

Also at the proclamation signing were Guma Esperansa director Laurie Ogumoro, Sr. Mary Stella Mangona, former U.S. Labor ombudsman and now Pacific Ombudsman for Humanitarian Law president Pamela Brown, Department of Public Safety Commissioner James Deleon Guerrero, personnel from DPS, CNMI Office of the Attorney General and other partners in addressing human trafficking.



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR
ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
RFQ14-GOV-028



Lower Base Water Distribution System Improvement

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting statements of qualification (SOQ) from licensed architectural and engineering firms (A&E) for the Design of the Lower Base Water Distribution System Improvement Project, Lower Base, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The full Request for Qualifications (RFQ) documents may be obtained by contacting Pedro Sasamoto, WTF Program Manager, by telephone at (670) 664-2274 or by email at psas@saipan.com. All questions concerning this proposal shall be submitted in writing no later than 4:00 pm, January 17, 2014 to Mr. Sasamoto by facsimile at (670) 664-2279.

The design and construction of the Lower Base Water Distribution System Improvement Project is made possible by a grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce. All element of the construction process shall meet standards of EDA. The EDA grant is matched by a grant from the Office of the Insular Affairs (OIA), U.S. Department of the Interior and requires a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance.

One original and four (4) copies shall be submitted to the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than **2:00 PM, (CNMI local time), on February 5, 2014.**

The SOQ shall be marked "**Lower Base Water Distribution System Improvement Project, RFQ14-GOV-028**". For firms within the CNMI, one (1) original and four (4) copies of SOQ must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than **2:00 p.m. (CNMI local time), on February 5, 2014.** Firms located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to Propose must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **2:00 p.m. (CNMI local time), on February 5, 2014,** and may be transmitted via facsimile to **(670) 664-1515** or email procurement@pticom.com. For firms located outside the CNMI, one original and four (4) copies of SOQ must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **February 5, 2014 AND** must be received no later than **February 14, 2014.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The CNMI reserves the right to reject any and all SOQ and to waive any imperfections in any SOQ if to do so shall be in the best interests of the CNMI. All SOQ shall become the exclusive property of the CNMI government.

/s/ Eloy S. Inos
Governor, CNMI

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

PUBLIC NOTICE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
TRUCKS WITH DUMP BODIES
RFP14-GOV-042

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude Hofschneider, are soliciting competitive sealed proposals according to the requirements of N.M.I.A.C. § 70-30.3-210 from qualified vendors to provide dump trucks for use on the Islands of Tinian and Rota. Proposals are to include costs associated with: equipment; training; and delivery to the Islands of Tinian and Rota as identified in the specifications. Trucks proposed must be similar to type identified in the scope of work. The Commonwealth is relying on the expertise of vendors in the selection of most appropriate equipment for use in the proposed operations. The specific pieces of equipment sought are two medium duty dump trucks with a 5-7 cu yard medium duty dump body & hoist. Although equipment is to be used primarily in hauling landfill cover, they will also be used in assorted activities of municipal operations, thus the Commonwealth is seeking flexibility in the type of equipment. Submitted proposals will be evaluated on a possible 100 points based on the following factors:

Element	Points
Price and appropriateness of proposed equipment;	50 points
Dealer experience and ability to meet needs of the Islands of Tinian and Rota.	50 points

All proposers will be subject to a responsibility determination as identified in NMIAC § 70-30.3-245 ("Responsibility Determination") which will evaluate whether the vendor has experience and resources for the required financing, delivery, and warranty. Proposals from parties who fail to meet the requirements of the Responsibility Determination will not be considered. Award shall be made to the responsible offeror whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

Proposals should address each item identified in the evaluation structure and must follow the proposal structure as identified in the proposal packet that can be obtained from the Office of Procurement & Supply. Proposal packets will be available on January 6, 2014 (ChST) at Office of Capital Improvement - Juan Sablan Memorial Building - Capitol Hill (670-664-2375). Proposals must pay particular attention to the preferred identified equipment specification and use this as a guide in submission of proposals. All questions regarding the RFP must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. on January 17, 2014 (ChST) to the Office of Capital Improvement via fax to (670-664-2408). Prospective bidders bear responsibility for proper transmission and receipt of submitted questions.

The selected vendor will be required to comply with all applicable Commonwealth and Federal laws. All proposals must be in a sealed envelope or container and marked "RFP14-GOV-042 Dump Truck Proposal" on the exterior and include an original and four copies. Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m., Friday February 7, 2014 (ChST) to:

Herman S. Sablan, Director
Marianas Procurement & Supply - Lower Base
P.O. Box 510008 CK
Saipan, MP 96950

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. Proposers bear all risk concerning delivery. For further information contact Carl Castro at the Office of Capital Improvement (670) 664-2375. All proposals become the property of the Commonwealth.

/s/ Eloy S. Inos
Governor

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply



CNMI Water Task Force
IFB14-GOV-039



Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting Sealed Bids from qualified individuals or firms for the lease of a warehouse on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The procurement specifications and special terms and conditions will be available at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan on or after **December 23, 2013.**

All questions regarding this Invitation for Bids shall be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 PM, **January 3, 2014** to Pedro Sasamoto, WTF Program Manager, at facsimile number (670) 664-2279.

Sealed Bids must be marked "**Lease of Warehouse**", **IFB14-GOV-039.** An original and four (4) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan no later than **2:00 P.M. , local time, on January 22, 2014** at which time Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

This procurement is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations (NMIAC 70-30.3). Bid procedures shall be in full compliance with NMIAC Section 70-30.3-205: Competitive Sealed Bidding. Preference is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funds for this project.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs. Award of a contract is contingent upon approval from DOI/OIA.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All Bids shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/Eloy S. Inos
Governor

/s/Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-14-008

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF FUEL FOR POWER GENERATION

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for the supply and delivery of approximately 18,000,000 US gallons annually of **Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Fuel (Grade No. 2-D \$15)** for CUC Power Generation facilities on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Fuel shall be uniform, first quality, ultra low sulfur type, which shall conform in all aspects to the requirements, as set forth in "Standard Specification for Diesel Fuel Oil" ASTM D975-11 or the latest revision.

The RFP package may be obtained upon completion of registration and receipt of a non-refundable deposit from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 for one set from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays. Prospective Proposers must register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on **January 16, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room 15, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-14-008, Supply & Delivery of Fuel for Power Generation", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **February 6, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

All Offerors are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The Proposal Price shall remain the same throughout the term of the contract except for the variation in the MOPS and government taxes, duties and fees. Note that the CNMI Government at present exempts the fuel supplier from paying liquid fuel tax (currently, \$0.15/gallon).

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

All questions or request for clarification must be submitted in writing no later than **January 21, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Procurement & Supply Manager, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Charles Warren, CUC Chief Financial Officer, via email charles.warren@cucgov.org and Wallon Young, CUC Deputy Director for Power via email wallon59@yahoo.com.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

Zoning Office seeks 'reasonable budget' to sustain its operation

» Board encourages management to explore federal grants

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With a budget it deems inadequate, the Zoning Office management, led by administrator Therese Ogumoro, is being encouraged by the board to explore federal grants to help sustain the agency's programs and operation.

Saipan Tribune learned that the Zoning Office is appropriated only \$128,000 for its personnel and all other expenses this fiscal year—an amount described by the agency officials as not enough to continue performing the office's critical responsibilities. The office is currently manned by seven personnel.

"Our office continues to work hard in looking for any funding opportunities and we hope the governor and lawmakers continue to support our requests for a budget to maintain our zoning program's operations and personnel needs. Our staff of seven with minimum budget level for operations is very tight—with each staff multitasking between the numerous responsibilities of this office as a regulatory agency tasked to oversee organized land uses and developments...I hope that we get more support for a reasonable budget to sustain this program and its critical responsi-

bilities," Ogumoro told *Saipan Tribune*.

At their Dec. 27 meeting, board members talked about exploring federal funds to supplement its operational needs. However, its first attempt to tap a federal grant failed, primarily due to lack of matching requirements.

Ogumoro disclosed that Zoning applied for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities Initiatives Program" but its application was disapproved due to deficiencies. *Saipan Tribune* learned that this program grant amounts to \$2 million and requires a 20-percent match.

"We learned that the reasons for not being awarded included insufficient justifications on criteria for threshold review. For instance, there was no matching

Settlement conference set in lawsuit vs Quichocho

U.S. District Court for the NMI Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy has set for Friday a settlement conference in the racketeering lawsuit filed by businesswoman Jung Ja Kim against lawyer Ramon K. Quichocho.

In a Friday order, Kennedy said the conference that she will preside over shall be attended by an authorized representative and counsel for each party.

funds identified and some required forms were not uploaded or were insufficient," said Ogumoro.

She described a recent teleconference with the federal agency as "very informative" and she assured that Zoning will continue to explore other opportunities.

"The Zoning Board chairman [Diego Blanco] continuously encourages the Zoning Office to search for grant opportunities to help our local budget fund our operations and personnel and this has been on top of our priorities. We had sought the help of our Grants Management Office as well as the office of U.S. Delegate Kilili but so far, based on report from my staff, the answer has been the same...they'll help us and let us know once any opportunity relevant to our Zoning program is identified," Ogumoro said.

"Parties are invited, but not required, to submit a confidential statement to the settlement judge," she said.

Kim, a Korean investor, filed the racketeering lawsuit against Quichocho and his wife, and the Quichocho law firm. She used to be client of Quichocho. She also filed separate disciplinary complaints against the lawyer. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-14-009

Integrated Resource Plan & Energy Supply Analysis

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms to develop CUC's Integrated Resource Plan, which is a long-range plan that will select the most cost-effective mix of energy resources, both supply-side and demand-side, following a review of commercially available base load and renewable energy alternatives. This project will also include the design and development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for total system power supply, the design and implementation of financial models to be used for comparing both energy supply and renewable power integration options, along with Independent Evaluator (IE) services to develop and administer third-party, technical and financial review of received energy supply proposals, for the purposes of advising the CUC during the energy supply proposal selection process.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 for one RFP package set. Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by February 10, 2014 to be considered.

A pre-proposal Conference will be held on **January 28, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST)**, at the CUC Training Room, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC RFP 14-009, Integrated Resource Plan & Energy Supply Analysis" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No.3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O.Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 26, 2014**. Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time.

All Offerors are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proposer awarded a contract.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 12, 2014 to Manny B. Sablan, Manager, CUC Procurement & Supply via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org. Responses to Questions will be provided no later than February 18, 2014.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director,
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

MANNY B. SABLAN
Manager, Procurement & Supply
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC RFP 14-001

Saipan Geothermal Resource Assessment

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting sealed proposals from qualified firms to collect and evaluate scientific data to better determine the potential for development of geothermal energy on Saipan. Available information suggests that the geothermal gradient beneath Saipan may be sufficiently steep to develop geothermal energy to generate electricity.

The technical complexity of the Project and the need to collect and evaluate extensive data will require the successful Proposer to provide the expertise from various professional disciplines, conduct exploratory drilling, and provide equipment and materials necessary to complete the Scope of Work.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 for one RFP package set. Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by February 10, 2014 to be considered.

A pre-proposal Conference will be held on January 27, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST), at the CUC Training Room, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC RFP 14-001 Saipan Geothermal Resource Assessment" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No.3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O.Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 24, 2014**. Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time.

All Offerors are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proposer awarded a contract.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 10, 2014 to Manny B. Sablan, Manager, CUC Procurement & Supply via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org. Responses to Questions will be provided no later than February 18, 2014.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director,
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

MANNY B. SABLAN
Manager, Procurement & Supply
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Technical assistance training for Labor

The CNMI Department of Labor has renewed its relationship with the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division in strengthening and coordinating efforts that will increase compliance of the Fair Labor Standards Act, Family Medical Leave Act, Service Contract Act, Davis Bacon Act, and other related acts as applicable. Both CNMI DOL and USDOL Wage and Hour have the responsibility to conduct a broad investigation or individual conciliations, obtain payment of back wages and to assess penalties.

In this renewed relationship, CNMI DOL's Enforcement, Hearing and Employment Services Divisions personnel to include Rota and Tinian DOL personnel will be undergoing training on Jan. 16, 2014, on Saipan.

CNMI DOL sees this renewed relationship as healthy and opportune as the CNMI DOL has begun improving and increasing labor enforcement activities that will promote good business practice and compliance of applicable labor laws, federal and state, within the CNMI. (*Office of the Governor*)

Fund outlines new health coverage premiums during extension period

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund, which handles the Group Health and Life Insurance Program of the government, announced new premium rates for retirees and active employees during the 60-day extension of health insurance coverage by policy carrier Aetna International.

The new premium rates come with a 40-percent increase for active employees.

From the existing rate of \$82.45 for a single member, the amount would go up to \$113.17 in January and February—an increase of \$30.72.

For active employees who are classified as couple, new premium rate is \$231.92 from the existing \$169.02—a dif-

ference of \$62.90.

Those classified as family will see an increase of \$98.30 on their premium—from \$263.83 to \$362.13.

Fund administrator Lillian Pangelinan informed affected employees and retirees that whoever disagrees with the new rates can elect to terminate their membership in the policy. Forms are available at the Fund office during business hours and on its website and are due for submission by Jan. 15.

Fund records show that there are approximately 2,400 individuals who benefit from the health coverage plan—both active employees of the government and retirees.

According to Pangelinan's memorandum that was also sent to department heads, the

40-percent increase for active members will also apply to retirees—or those members of the settlement fund class suit.

For single retiree, his/her share of health insurance coverage will go up to \$122.60 from the existing \$89.32—an increase of \$33.28.

For couples, the new rate is \$251.32, which is \$68.22 higher than the \$183.10 they used to pay for their coverage.

For family, an additional \$106.50 will be charged: from the existing \$285.81 share to \$392.31.

Pangelinan emphasized that for retirees, once they terminate their health insurance coverage, "by law, you will not be able to re-enroll in the health insurance program."

The Group Health Life In-

surance Program is benefit program of the government that is administered by the Retirement Fund administrator. For many years, Aetna International has been servicing the members' health insurance; its

contract expired on Dec. 31, 2013. A 60-day extension was later inked by parties. This extension will allow the government to negotiate an affordable health insurance policy for all enrollees.



INVITATION FOR BID MVA-IFB-14-2310

For: Purchase of Vehicles for the Marianas Visitors Authority

Closing Date: **January 30, 2014**

Time: **3:00 P.M.**

Submit sealed proposals to:

Marianas Visitors Authority
San Jose Professional Building
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the scope of work at the **Marianas Visitors Authority** office between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., (closed 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.) Monday to Friday, except holidays or by visiting the **MVA** website at www.mymarianas.com.

/s/ JAMES NELSON
Acting Chairman of the Board

/s/ PERRY P. TENORIO
Managing Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MVA-RFP-14-2311

For: Tourist Exit Survey Services for the Marianas Visitors Authority

Closing Date: **January 30, 2014**

Time: **3:00 P.M.**

Submit sealed proposals to:

Marianas Visitors Authority
San Jose Professional Building
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the scope of work at the **Marianas Visitors Authority** office between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., (closed 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.) Monday to Friday, except holidays or by visiting the **MVA** website at www.mymarianas.com.

/s/ JAMES NELSON
Acting Chairman of the Board

/s/ PERRY P. TENORIO
Managing Director



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San Jose Village
P.O. Box 501127
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: (670) 234-7455/234-7427
Facsimile No.: (670) 234-7256

Attorneys for Plaintiff Commonwealth Development Authority.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY,
Plaintiff,

vs.

PLASTAG ENTERPRISES, INC.,
the ESTATE OF PLASIDO M. TAGABUEL,
DORIS TAGABUEL,
ARLENE I. TAGABUEL, and
JOHN HENRY I. TAGABUEL,
Defendants.

Civil Action
No. 04-0482A

AMENDED
NOTICE OF
AUCTION

The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, hereinafter referred to as auctioneer, and the Development Corporation Division of the Commonwealth Development Authority, hereinafter referred to as CDA, hereby give notice that all of the right, title, and interest of the Defendants Plastag Enterprises, Inc., the Estate of Plasio M. Tagabuel, Doris Tagabuel, Arlene I. Tagabuel, and John Henry I. Tagabuel in the following described, real property situated in the CNMI will be sold at an auction:

Lot 2003-4-2, (formerly part of Lot 2003-4-R1, formerly part of Lot 2003-4, formerly part of Lot 2004-R2, formerly part of Lot 2003 REM, formerly part of original 2003, TD 771) as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 2110/88, the original of which was recorded 11 May 88 as Document No. 88-1525 at Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan, including all improvements, appurtenances and easements therewith.

The auction sale will be open to the general public and will be held at CDA's Conference Room, Saipan, at **2:00 p.m., on Friday, January 31, 2014**, subject to the following announced terms and conditions:

- 1. Minimum Bid.** No minimum opening bid.
- 2. Reserve.** The auction shall be held with reserve.
- 3. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer.** Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auctions with reserve, auctioneer shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction:
 - a.) To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
 - b.) To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
 - c.) To reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Manuel A. Sablan, Executive Director, Commonwealth Development Authority, P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7145, Fax: 235-7147; or to F. Matthew Smith, P.O. Box 501127, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

5. Deposit: Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, cashier's check or credit card. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

7. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property; contact CDA for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of Plastag Enterprises, Inc., the Estate of Plasio M. Tagabuel, Doris Tagabuel, Arlene I. Tagabuel, and John Henry I. Tagabuel in the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty, and subject to the redemption laws of the CNMI. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.

Dated this 23rd day of December 2013.

/s/ JAMES C. DELEON GUERRERO, COMMISSIONER
Department of Public Safety



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the public is advised that the Commonwealth Public Transportation Advisory Board will hold its FY 2014 1st Regular Membership Meeting on Thursday, January 16, 2014, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the COTA's Conference Room, 2nd Floor, NMI Retirement Fund Building, Isa Drive, Capital Hill, Saipan. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

Preliminary Agenda

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Welcome & Introduction of new Staff & Guests**
 - A. Two new COTA Transit Operators (Drivers) vs. WIA Trainee
 - B. Two COTA's Transit Operators (Drivers) and Two New Transit Information Specialists
 - C. New WIA Trainee as COTA Transit Information Specialist
- III. Roll call**
- IV. Adoption of Agenda**
- V. Adoption of October 22, 2013 4th Regular Membership Meeting Minutes**
- VI. Correspondence**
- VII. Public Comment on Agenda Items**
- VIII. Old Business**
 - A. COTA Relocated to New Office
 - B. Official/Final Report: Saipan Fixed-Flex Route & Paratransit System Feasibility Study
 - C. COTA's Propose Changes to HB. 18-39, "Parking Meter Act": Update
 - D. Route Match Transportation Management Software & Vehicle Tracking System Contract: Status
 - E. Saipan-Tinian Ferry Boat Feasibility: Status
 - F. COTA Website (www.cota.gov.mp) Redesign and Maintenance Service: Update
 - G. FTA ESMS Training & Technical Assistance: Update
 - H. VTCLI Grant One-Call/One-Click Transportation Information, Resource & Referral Service Center Project: Update
 - I. VTCLI Grant Marketing, Outreach and Planning Project: Update
 - J. COTA's USDA/CTAA Rural Transit Long-Term Technical Assistance MOU: Update
 - K. cnmitransit.com: Public Transit Online Survey Forum - Completed
 - L. COTA's Online Survey Monkey: Completed
 - M. cota.ideascale.com: Online Transit Dialogue: Ongoing
 - N. COTA's New Administration Bldg., & Vehicle Maintenance Facility A&E RFP: Status
- IX. New Business**
 - A. Paratransit Vehicles/CARS ITB's: Update
 - B. Smart Card ITB: Update
 - C. Draft COTA Safety, Security & Emergency Preparedness Plan
 - D. Draft COTA/VTCLI Project Performance Measures
 - E. Draft Asset Management Plan Development
- X. Financial Status Report**
 - A. FY 2012 Urbanized Formula Grant
 - B. FY 2013 Rural Other than Urbanized Formula Grant
 - C. Veterans Transportation & Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) II Grant
 - i. One-Call/One-Click Transportation Service Center
 - ii. Transportation Marketing, Outreach and Planning
 - D. Program Income
- XI. New Grant/Local Funding Status Report**
 - A. FTA Sec. 5309 New/Small Start Grant: **Action**
 - B. FY 2014 Rural Other than Urbanized Formula Grant Budget: **Action**
 - C. Local 2015 Budget: **Action**
- XIII. Executive Session:** CPTAB may vote to go into executive session as provided under the CNMI Open Government Act
- XIII. Misc.**
 - A. COTA's New Service Vehicle
- XIV. Next Meeting: April 17, 2014**
- XV. Adjournment**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require special accommodations are requested to call COTA three (3) days in advance at 664-2292.

/s/THOMAS J. CAMACHO, Chairman

This ad was paid for by funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grant, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

Strong cyclone hits Tonga, killing at least 1

NUKU'ALOFA, Tonga (AP)—Authorities were searching remote islands for cyclone victims on Sunday after the most powerful storm to hit Tonga in decades cut a swathe of destruction through this South Pacific archipelago, leaving at least one person dead and several injured.

Relief efforts following Saturday's storm were concentrating on the Ha'apai islands—one of Tonga's three island groups between the main island of Tongatapu in the south and the Vava'u islands to the north, Tonga's Director of Emergencies Leveni Aho said.

Cyclone Ian hit Tonga with gusts up to 287 kilometers (178

miles) per hour. The storm was later downgraded from the top of five-scale destructive cyclones to category four, with gusts of up to 250 kph (155 mph). On Sunday, the cyclone was tracking south-east away from Tonga.

Two navy patrol boats carrying tarpaulins, tents and other emergency supplies left Tongatapu to bring help to victims who were cut off in the Ha'apai islands.

Aho said authorities have been unable to make telephone contact with 23 islands, which account for most of the inhabited islands in the Ha'apai group.

"The patrol boats are still out there, going from island to island to scout for information," Aho said.

Ha'apai islands are home to 8,000 people, most of whom

live on the devastated islands of Lifuka, where one person died, and Foa.

Aho estimated that hundreds of people on the two islands were taking shelter in church buildings that were being used as evacuation centers.

A New Zealand air force P3 Orion plane made a surveillance flight over the disaster area on Sunday, taking pictures showing the extent of the damage that surprised officials.

Aho said up to 70 percent of the homes and buildings in some areas had been flattened.

"There is much more damage on the ground that we anticipated before," he said.

"At this point, there's only one fatality. There are some injured, but that is still manageable with the existing medical

facilities there," he added.

He said there were no reports of survivors with life-threatening injuries.

Tongan authorities would further assess the damage before they would consider asking for international help, Aho said.

Aho said that storm damage to the Tongatapu and Vava'u island groups was slight.

Weather was fine Sunday, but rough seas were hampering the patrol boats' relief mission, he said.

Tonga is an archipelago of 176 islands, 36 of which are inhabited by more than 100,000 people. Its economy relies on fish export, tourism and remittances from Tongan communities overseas, with about 40 percent of the population living in poverty.

Court garnishes property of mayor's office employee

The federal court has ordered the Tinian Mayor's Office to withhold the money or property of its staff, Alex San Nicolas Borja, to satisfy a \$73,408 balance in a court judgment against him for his 2000 conviction in a cattle rustling case.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona issued a writ of garnishment to the Tinian Mayor's

Office after the U.S. government applied for one.

The judge said the Tinian Mayor's Office shall withhold and retain any property on which Borja has a substantial nonexempt interest.

A writ of garnishment is a legal process where the court orders a person or entity—the garnishee—to hold money or property owed within 10 days

after the writ is served. A garnishee may be a person, entity or corporation in possession of money or property.

According to assistant U.S. attorney Jessica Cruz, a judgment in the amount of \$119,300 has been entered against Borja and co-defendants in the case, which includes a \$119,200 in restitution and \$100 in special assessment fee.

Cruz said a third of the amount or \$39,733 is Borja's responsibility.

Cruz said a balance of \$73,408 (\$39,498 in restitution plus \$33,735 in restitution interest plus \$175 in penalties) remains outstanding.

Borja was among four persons indicted in federal court in 1999 in connection with cattle rustling on Tinian. He pleaded guilty in January 2000 to conspiring to conceal beef and was slapped with an 11-month prison term. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

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FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEY FOR Plaintiff

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

**NORTHERN MARIANAS
HOUSING CORPORATION,**
Plaintiff,
-v-
**HILBERT HENRY C.
SAN NICOLAS,**
Defendant.

**CIVIL ACTION
NO. 11-0322**

SECOND AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on October 5, 2012, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot No. 008 T 266, situated in Marpo Heights, Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 812 square meters, more or less, as shown on DLS Check No. 008 T 03, dated March 31, 1999, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 99-848 dated March 31, 1999, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, January 17, 2014, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 20th day of December, 2013:

/s/MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer



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MEETING NOTICE



Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority, hereby gives notice that a **Regular Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, January 15, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.** at the MVA Conference Room San Jose Professional Building Saipan, MP 96950.

MEETING AGENDA

- 1) **Preliminary Matters**
 1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Adoption of Agenda
 4. Adoption of Minutes – December 10, 2013
- 2) **Public Comments**
- 3) **Committee Reports**
 1. Finance
 2. Personnel
- 4) **New Business**
 1. Air Service Support for Wuhan, Tianjin and Hangzhou, China
 2. Destination Enhancement – PDM Sound System
 3. Vladivostok Russia Office launch
 4. MITT Moscow
 5. SITT Novosibirsk
- 5) **Old Business**
- 6) **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
- 7) **Executive Session**
- 8) **Adjournment**

/s/ Marian Aldan-Pierce
Chair, MVA Board of Directors

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 13, 2006

MHS operational funds down to \$40K

Marianas High School is literally on its knees, "begging" the government and community for financial help after getting only a measly \$40,000 for its operational expenses in school year 2005-2006. The school, which has the CNMI's largest student population, only received \$40,000 from the Public School System for this school year—\$20,000 short of last school year's budget allocation, according to MHS principal Karen Borja. She said this is the lowest amount the high school has gotten in four years. In 2003, MHS received \$200,000 for its school operations. In 2004, the funding was reduced to \$100,000, followed by \$60,000 in 2005; now it is down to only \$40,000. "We are just so in desperate need," said Borja. She said the money given them this year would only defray the costs for grass cutting, for security, and toilet paper in the school. Minor repairs were also included in the budget but major repairs that the school need just have to be put on hold.

Cohen says support for new govt assured if...

The Fitial administration can count on the U.S. government to support his priorities as long as basic federal interests are protected, a visiting U.S. Department of the Interior official said yesterday. Deputy Interior Assistant Secretary David Cohen, who heads the Office of Insular Affairs, met with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial yesterday morning. They discussed how the federal and local governments could coordinate efforts to attract business to the Commonwealth and create more local jobs. "As long as we have effective communication with one another, we'll be able to make sure that OIA can be supportive of his priorities while still protecting federal interests," Cohen said.

January 13, 2007

Four years to \$7.25 level

The federal minimum wage bill would give the Commonwealth four years to reach the proposed rate of \$7.25 an hour. The U.S. House-approved legislation boosting the federal minimum wage offers a separate timetable for the CNMI, which would be subject to a federal wage law for the first time. H.R. 2 would increase the local wage floor by \$4.20 in nine steps. From the current rate of \$3.05 an hour, the CNMI minimum wage would go to \$3.55 an hour 60 days after the bill is signed into law by the president.

Cost to replace stolen wires: \$2K-plus

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. spent more than \$2,000 in manpower and equipment for the power replacement alone at three water wells that were vandalized Wednesday by copper wire thieves. CUC spokesperson Pamela Mathis told Saipan Tribune that the utility agency incurred \$727.41 to replace the wire at the water well chlorination system called SQ 150. For the two other water wells (called SQ 111 and SQ 12), CUC spent \$589.42 and \$1,456.25 respectively. "It doesn't include manpower and water equipment. So that's the cost to replace the electrical system to the water system," she explained.

January 13, 2008

'Medicaid cap hurts NMI's poor'

Insurance coverage for healthcare in the CNMI is very limited and is hobbled by limited Medicaid coverage that particularly hurts low-income residents, according to the CNMI Department of Public Health. Most families find that the economic growth burden of carrying health insurance is too high, according to Benjamin Seman, chairman of the CNMI Cancer Control Coalition. The CNMI's Medicaid coverage is available only to U.S. citizens and follows the U.S. poverty guidelines. As such, all assets, including property, are all taken into account when determining eligibility. Seman said many low-income uninsured and underinsured people in the CNMI have homestead property.

Bishop to lawmakers: Seek wisdom and pass it on to future

Bishop Tomas B. Camacho urged incoming lawmakers yesterday to seek wisdom and pass it on to the next generation. In his homily during a Mass for the 16th Legislature, Camacho called "a new beginning" the Monday inauguration of the newly elected leaders. "It is a time of hope. It is a time when we look to the future and think that perhaps you, our leaders, will have the wisdom to guide us through difficult times," the bishop said.

Birnbrich is named deputy attorney general

CNMI Attorney General Joey P. San Nicolas named Gilbert Birnbrich as the deputy attorney general effective Dec. 30, 2013.

The post has been sitting vacant since former deputy AG Viola Alepuyo resigned in April 2013. Birnbrich served as the chief of

the Civil Division for the last two years.

"It is with great confidence that I announce the delegation of deputy attorney general to Gilbert Birnbrich," said San Nicolas. "He demonstrates professionalism and is a diligent individual. I can attest to his capabilities and his commitment to serve the people of the CNMI."

As a deputy attorney general, Birnbrich's duties and responsibilities will be that of administering the day to day operations of the department, in addition to acting as attorney general in the absence of the attorney general.

"I am honored and humbled to be appointed deputy AG. I know that it is a big responsi-

bility not just for the office but for the entire CNMI. I promise the AG and the people of the Commonwealth that I will work hard to fulfill my duties and justify the confidence the AG has of my abilities," said Birnbrich.

Birnbrich, a native of Columbus, Ohio received his undergraduate degree from

Ohio State University and law degree from the University of Toledo in Toledo, Ohio. He arrived in the CNMI in 2003 and served as a law clerk for Judge Alex Munson at the Federal District Court. In 2006, Birnbrich entered private practice here on island up until his decision to join the OAG in February of 2010. **(OAG)**

US Attorney's Office collects \$575K in civil, criminal actions in FY 2013

HAGATNA, Guam—U.S. Attorney Alicia A.G. Limtiaco said Friday that the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands collected \$575,199.11 in criminal and civil actions in fiscal year 2013. Of this amount, \$542,674.11 was collected in criminal actions and \$32,525 was collected in civil actions.

Attorney General Eric Holder announced on Thursday that the Justice Department collected \$8.1 billion in civil and criminal actions in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2013.

The more than \$8 billion in collections in fiscal 2013 represents nearly three times the appropriated \$2.76 billion budget for the 94 U.S. Attorney's offices and the main litigating divisions in that same period.

"The department's enforcement actions help to not only ensure justice is served, but also deliver a valuable return to the American people," said Holder. "It is critical that Congress provide the resources necessary to match the department's mounting caseload. As these figures show, supporting our federal prosecutors is a sound investment."

"During this time of economic and fiscal challenges, these collections are more important than ever," said Limtiaco. "The U.S. Attorney's Office is dedicated to protecting the public and recovering funds for victims of federal crime and for the federal treasury. We will continue to hold accountable those who seek to profit from their illegal activities."

The U.S. Attorneys' Offices, along with the depart-

ment's litigating divisions, are responsible for enforcing and collecting civil and criminal debts owed the U.S. and criminal debts owed federal crime victims. The law requires defendants to pay restitution to victims of certain federal crimes who have suffered a physical injury or financial loss. While restitution is paid to the victim, criminal fines and felony assessments are paid to the department's Crime Victims' Fund, which distributes the funds to state victim compensation and victim assistance programs.

The largest civil collections were from affirmative civil enforcement cases, in which the United States recovered government money lost to fraud or other misconduct or collected fines imposed on individuals and/or corporations for violations of federal health, safety, civil rights or environmental laws. In addition, civil debts were collected on behalf of several federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Internal Revenue Service, Small Business Administration and Department of Education.

Additionally, the U.S. Attorney's office in Guam, working with partner agencies and divisions, collected \$36,220.00 in asset forfeiture actions in fiscal year 2013. Forfeited assets deposited into the Department of Justice Assets Forfeiture Fund are used to restore funds to crime victims and for a variety of law enforcement purposes. **(USAO)**

Congress observes moment of silence for Ben Blaz

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU) spoke Friday on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to pay tribute to the life and legacy of the late congressman Vincente "Ben" Garrido Blaz. She asked that the House observe a moment of silence in honor of Blaz, who passed away on Jan. 8, 2014 at the age of 85.

"I rise to pay tribute to the late Vincente 'Ben' Garrido Blaz, Guam's former congressman and a retired brigadier general in the U.S. Marine Corps," said Bordallo. "Ben passed away last night at the age of 85."

"Ben was a longtime friend whose lifetime of service to Guam and our nation has been an inspiration to generations. As a survivor of the Japanese oc-

cupation of Guam during World War II, Ben had a strong sense of patriotism and duty to our country. He was commissioned as an officer in the Marine Corps in 1951 and went on to become the first Chamorro to achieve the rank of brigadier general. In 1984, Ben was elected to serve in this House, where he represented the people of Guam for four terms.

"Throughout my time in Congress, Ben has been a strong source of support and guidance. I'm grateful for his counsel and friendship, and I'll miss him dearly. I join the people of Guam in mourning the loss of Congressman Ben Blaz. Our thoughts and prayers are with his sons, Mike and Tom, and the entire Blaz family." **(PR)**



CONGRATULATIONS!

James Taitano Hall, the son of Skip and Vickie Hall, tied the knot with Joanna Dela Cruz, the daughter of Joe and Kay Dela Cruz, in a wonderful wedding ceremony at the San Jose Church on Tinian last Saturday morning. The reception was held at Kammer Beach that evening. James is a video editor and graphics artist in Honolulu, while Joanna works in the Oahu visitor industry. Both are Tinian High School graduates. Other photo shows Fr. Reyes, who officiated the ceremony, having his picture taken with the newlyweds.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

2 Malaysians get 2-year terms for use of fake credit cards

GUAM—Junnn Yang Tan, 25, and Aik Han Heng, age 36, both citizens of Malaysia, were sentenced on Jan. 7, 2014, in the District Court of Guam for their convictions of conspiracy to commit access device fraud, access device fraud, and aggravated identity theft. Each one was sentenced to a 24-month term of imprisonment to be followed by three years of supervised release. They were also ordered to jointly pay \$19,369.56 restitution to the victims of their criminal conduct. On July 4, 2012, Tan and

Heng traveled to Guam from Malaysia and used, and attempted to use, counterfeit credit cards to fraudulently obtain goods and services from hotels and merchants in Tumon. Both Tan and Heng possessed 24 counterfeit cards. Some of the credit cards were encoded with stolen credit card account information of account holders in the mainland United States with institutions such as Capital One Bank in Virginia, Citicorp in Maryland, and American Express Co. in Florida. Tan

and Heng were arrested July 5, 2012, by officers of the Guam Police Department.

Alicia A.G. Limtiaco, U.S. Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, stated: "Identity theft and related white collar and financial fraud crimes victimize individuals, financial institutions and merchants. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands and the Department of Justice are committed to combating identify theft and

other white collar and financial fraud crimes. We will continue to dedicate federal resources effectively to prevent, investigate and prosecute the unlawful use of identifying information. Federal and local law enforcement are committed to protecting our community and consumers against theft, fraud and other related criminal activity."

This case was investigated by GPD and the U.S. Secret Service and prosecuted by assistant U.S. attorney Marivic David. **(USAO)**

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

'The dark side' of America's fight against terrorism

It has been more than a year since the Senate Intelligence Committee approved a voluminous report on the detention and interrogation practices of the George W. Bush administration. But the 6,000-page document remains under wraps, even as defenders of "enhanced interrogation" techniques such as waterboarding continue to contend that they produced valuable intelligence, an assertion the study reportedly rejects. President Obama should move promptly to ensure that the public can scrutinize both the report and the CIA's response to it.

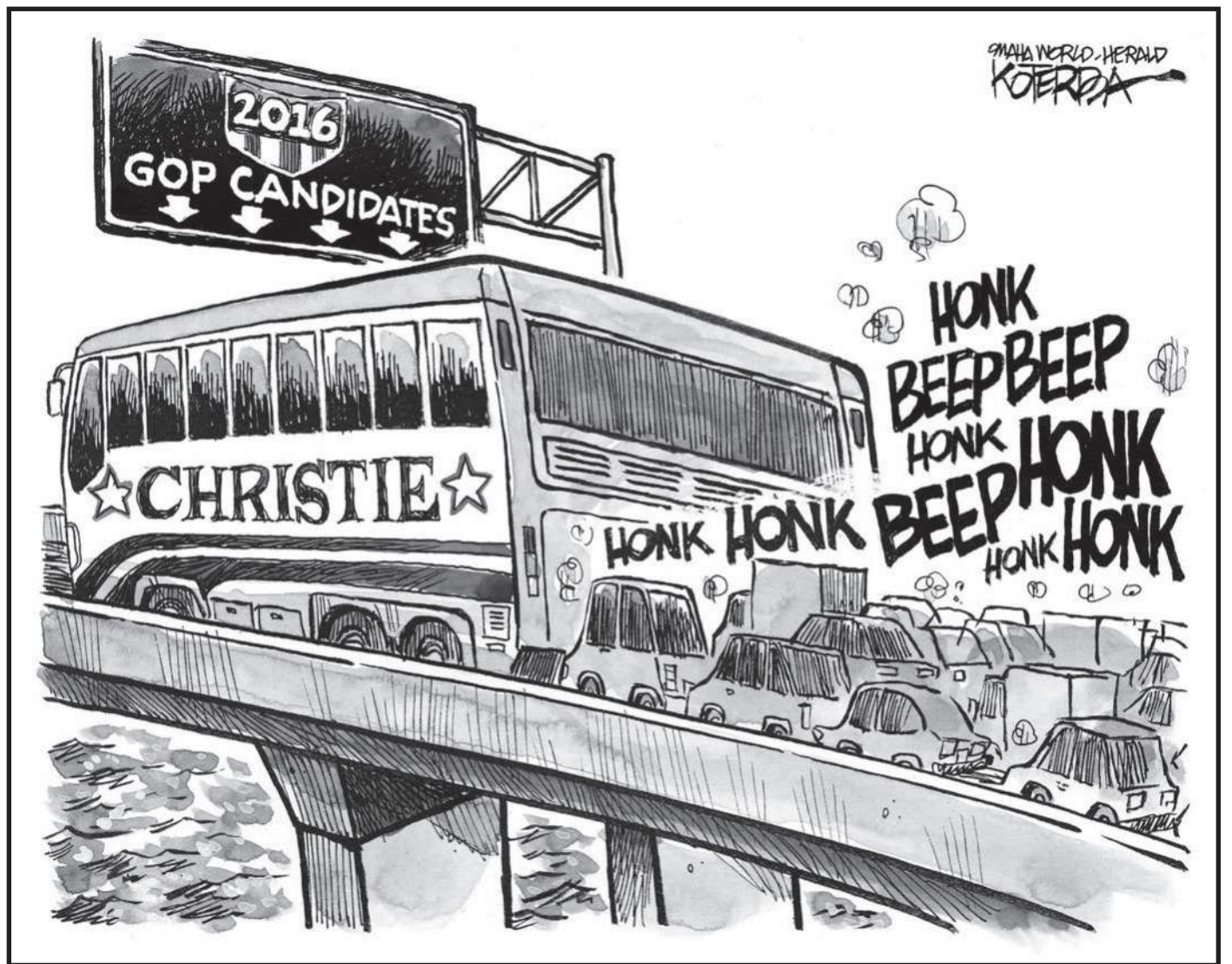
Thanks to disclosures in the news media, congressional investigations and a report by the CIA's inspector general, many disgusting details of the Bush administration's treatment of suspected terrorists are already known, from the imprisonment of suspects at "black sites" abroad to the repeated waterboarding of suspected al-Qaida operatives Khalid Shaikh Mohammed and Abu Zubaydah. The public also has seen the memos by Bush administration lawyers that used contorted reasoning to rationalize torture.

But the Intelligence Committee report would offer a comprehensive overview of what happened when, in the words of former Vice President Dick Cheney, the U.S. traveled to "the dark side" in an attempt to prevent another 9/11. The report also would shed light on whether waterboarding and other inhumane tactics were effective in preventing future plots or locating the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden, a debate that continues to this day (not that torture would be justified even if it were effective).

The Intelligence Committee report was approved on a mostly party-line vote, and the committee's ranking Republican, Sen. Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, said it contains "significant errors, omissions, assumptions and ambiguities—as well as a lot of cherry-picking." The CIA has submitted a response to the report that, according to the agency, "detailed significant errors in the study." But it's impossible for the public to evaluate the report (or the attempts to refute it) if it is not released.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., the chairwoman of the Intelligence Committee, says the administration is willing to have a part of the report made public and that the panel will vote soon on releasing an executive summary along with findings, conclusions and the CIA's comments. We believe the committee should release the whole report, omitting only details that threaten the exposure of sources and methods, not information that would simply be embarrassing. Obama, who prides himself on prohibiting waterboarding and other forms of torture, should make it clear that this is his preference as well, whatever the CIA says.

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Cold

Polar vortex is the term used in U.S. media for the freezing temperature that blew in from the Arctic Circle to the Midwest and the northeastern Atlantic seaboard of North America. An aerial photo of the frozen lake by the windy city of Chicago had a chilling effect on my bones, recalling the years I hung out there.

We are not alien to the cold. I remember one cold day in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan when I arrived, wearing a tropical three-piece. My colleagues, who hurriedly sent me off from Chicago where I transited from Manila, said that I had ample time to visit the old Navy surplus store when I got to the Canadian prairie. The wind chill that day in the late '70s was minus 37C, and I was one unhappy camper out of the airport.

Jan. 7 and 8 are considered the coldest in Dong Bei this year, and it was cold. Since my working visa expires tomorrow the 14th, I trudged along to the Metro (happily it opened the university terminal December) on the coldest day of the year to apply for a year's visa at the Foreign Affairs office in town.

Here's how cold it was. Tears from the duct involuntarily started dripping out two minutes after stepping out from my residence into the biting cold. Press releases on the polar vortex advised folks to stay out of the cold as H2O freezing can occur within five minutes. Ours being just normal cold, I was properly earmuffed, adequately nose- and mouth-covered, but the cotton shield was doubly dangerous as it absorbed the wetness instead of letting it run like polymer materials do. One is susceptible to freezing, which can result in frostbite!

Our cold took longer to deliver its sting but after the 15-minute walk to the terminal, lowered my hood, loosened the scarf, and took out the muffs, my distinctive brown face was already bloody red.

But the external cold was not as chilling compared to the internal one. Hustling was a mode of operation eons ago but at a tender age of seven decades, had I followed the normal course, I would be a doting grandpa to my four grandsons (yup, my two son-in-laws had too much Y chromosomes) shuttling between their domiciles in Chicago and Oakland, California. Mighty glad I am nowhere the city-by-the-lake this week. Instead, I am hustling for basic survival as China implements rules in the books, one of which is the disqualification of foreigners over 65 to hold teaching jobs.

There is also a tinge of xenophobia as China flexes its economic power to show the world that it no longer is the world's doormat for many foreign investments in the past to wipe its arrogant shoes on while earnings flourished on the shoulders of cheap labor and rode on the back of subsidized factory electrical power.

A friend from Saipan was rather colorful in his metaphor. When he heard of my narrative of events following the news that the visa

By JAIME VERGARA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

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office refused to approve the university's submission for another contract year, he said: "You were screwed!" The sexual metaphor did not come as a surprise.

Considering how many of the female Chinese garment factory workers found bar stools in Garapan and other watering holes, and liberally opened extremities to tars on R&R for a few green bucks, one lady friend's response was very telling: "So they treat you like a discarded used condom?"

She meant no harm. She was just stating a fact familiar to her as she continues to remit earnings to pay for a two-story Jiangsu house where she plunked savings to meet a 30-percent down payment and low interest loan on the remaining 70, as a first-time house buyer. Her parents who occupy the house have only praise for their daughter who works in public relations!

From a distance and from the horizontal sight things are viewed from Saipan's ground level, the choice of images is understandable. However, there is a coldness inside of me from hindsight for not paying more attention to social nets to make my journey into the sunset of my years smoother.

My hustle is now hampered by knee aches when stepping out into the cold, wobbly ankles when slipping on icy surfaces, stiff elbows from rheumatoid arthritis, and the painful grate of the old cervical spondylosis. Still, we hustle.

China just relaxed its one-child per family policy to allow couples to have two if one member was an only child. The retirement age of 60 for men and 55 for women was raised to 65 and 60, respectively, now that longevity is more widespread than when the policy was first adopted. Superannuation, elders' housing, geriatric care, and health benefits are high on the government's challenge.

After being told to secure clearance from my neighborhood police, I stopped by the men's room at the Foreign Affairs office. I expected red blotches in response to the cold when I blew my runny nose on tissue paper but when I looked closely on my image in the mirror, and I saw a decent silver mane and a wrinkled face emit a smile, as if to say: "Here is the sage who came out of the cold!"

I put my earmuffs back on, and huffed back on the metro to the police station!

Simple life a long time ago

Took a sentimental journey to the old village more than 60 years ago from two recent issues: A story on green living on Rota and lifestyle decisions articulated by Frank R. Agulto. Growing up as woefully poor kids granted us a unique perspective about simple life then.

There's the couple who hailed from a far away land showing the benefits in the use of the natural environment for their livelihood. It included harnessing the sea breeze, gardening in fertile land, building water catchment, raising animals in the backyard and use of alternative energy.

Frank brought us to our senses that we need not chase unreachable aspirations riddled with uncertainty. We've lived a simple island lifestyle since time immemorial. We've lived it but slowly parted with it in search of a certain dream so distant from the reality of island setting even for 99 percent of folks across the country.

After Supertyphoon Jean in 1968, there was the rush to build cement houses for safety reasons. There was no time to think through a practical architectural design for the tropics. At day's end we found that we've literally built huge ovens that require powerful air-conditioning units to cool it down. Traditional family houses known as "sadevani" or "siguale" would have worked. The former is built with roofing sunk in the dirt, the latter covered with marshland reed (roofing) designed for fresh air. We trashed both.

The old house (built after the war) had large windows and screens in the frame to ward off mosquitoes. The breeze blows through the house daily. How pleasant it was hearing the rhythm of the rain as it dances on tin roof or peeping out into a clear starry night as your eyes are slowly shut by the twinkles at a distance. The crowing rooster serves as our clock at the first crack of dawn.

The old farm was the epicenter of family activity. We cleared, uprooted, and cultivated the land from dawn to dusk for family sustenance. Otherwise we'd go coconut crab hunting in dense jungles or follow master fishermen just to get our share of protein from the sea. Those were the "Hard Days Nights" of the late

'50s and '60s. It was communal living at its best with simplicity.

Today, kids work with their iPads, Kindles, iPhones conversing, texting, downloading games and movies. They have become heirs to the couch-potato culture as they develop dangerous and fatal non-communicable illnesses like high blood pressure, serious cardiovascular issues and diabetes. We pile bad health habits adopting the couch-potato culture. Over time, a lot of the local folks contracted Type II diabetes that fast tracks kidney failure and dialysis treatment. Throw in serious heart problems to complete our perennial health list.

We certainly can make a difference changing into a simpler lifestyle. But it takes personal resolve and a unified decision by the three people we know best—Me, Myself and I—to shift gear. If the three guys could take the first step together, we could realistically make amends to lighten our health and financial burdens.

The simpler ways isn't difficult. Even the couple from Germany has proven that what was ours a long time ago still works. Let's reset our buttons and revisit what's ours since yester-years.

'Those were the days'

Kids would take up menial jobs to meet incidental needs. Yep! If you had money, buying a cup of ice or donut is sufficient signal you're making it!

We didn't have restrooms but outhouses that send you back to the shower room to get rid of the combined fatal deodorant of old diesel and stench from a nearby pigpen.

No hair spray then but we had Japanese pomade we plaster on our head to form the Elvis Presley curl locks upstairs.

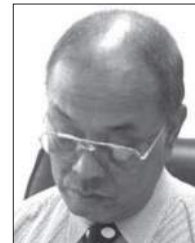
Those were the days when girls dump guys who didn't have Beatles' boots—you know, wearing the latest fad. You get hit with double jeopardy—a broken heart while still bootless.

There was no TV then and a single movie house in CK. We

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



wait for the guys to come out so they could tell us what the starring did. We repeat the story elsewhere as though we watched the flick ourselves.

We'd go swimming at Sugar Dock rather than attend catechism class. We thought we could outsmart mom. Nah! She touches our salty forehead and sends us into heavy anxiety land. I don't mind the belt but I hate the speech that precedes it.

We all learned how tasty food is at the old farm than at home. Well, we slaved through rows of plants moving our entire body. You're drained by 10am as the sun or mercury level increases. By then, you'd swallow up anything to regain your strength.

You learn to do Olympic style running as you head to church in the morning, tip-toeing so you don't wake up the neighborhood dogs. If he sniffs you, you're off to the races at dawn.

Tried reconciling the "what might have been" had we done something right versus the "what it has been." We continue to sink in the tsunami of bankruptcy. I think the simpler term is "broke"! Sad, the lights are on but nobody's home. Hello?

Remember the nursery rhyme *Long Ago*? Gone, huh? Ever wonder why the lack of conscious leadership and equilibrium to restore the buying power of taxpayers reduced by over 100 percent this year? Conscious leadership is a scarcity, *di ba*?

Laugh often and 19 more rules to live by

I've made a list of 20 rules to live by.

1. Bring your sense of humor with you at all times. Bring your friends with a sense of humor. If their friends have a sense of humor, invite them, too. Remember this when going to hospitals, weight-loss centers and funerals, as well as when going to work, coming home, waking up and going to sleep.

2. If it's worth crying over, it's probably worth laughing at. Cultivate a sense of perspective that permits you to see the wider and longer view of the situation; this will help you realize that although your situation is upsetting, it might also one day become a terrific story.

3. Other people don't care what you're wearing.

4. Don't be a sissy. This is especially important if you are a woman. Girls can be sissies, but behaving like a simpering, whining, fretful coward as an adult is unacceptable no matter what your gender happens to be. If you are anxious, scared and feeling powerless, you don't need to change your behavior; you need to change your life.

5. Don't lie. Cheat the devil and tell the truth.

6. There is one exception to the rule above: Never say a baby looks like a sausage wearing a hat. The parents will not forgive you. This is a situation in which telling the truth is not wholly necessary. If it's not possible to tell the whole truth for fear of causing undue pain, just say the baby looks "happy."

7. Never use the passive voice. Do not say, "It will get done." Say, "I'll do it" and then offer a solid, unwavering deadline. Always make your deadline.

8. The pinnacle is always slippery; no peak is safe. Only plateaus offers a place to rest. Are you ready to stay on a plateau or are you

climbing? Decide and pack your bags accordingly.

9. As we age, love changes. As a youth, you fall for an unattainable ideal. When you're more mature, you fall in love with a person: "Sure, he has only one eye in the middle of his forehead," you'll rationalize, "But he never forgets my birthday."

10. Power is the ability to persuade stupid people to do intelligent things and intelligent people to do stupid things. This is why power is dangerous.

11. Sherlock Holmes said, "Work is the best antidote to sorrow, my dear Watson." Listen to Mr. Holmes.

12. Everybody wants a short cut to love, prosperity and weight loss, although not necessarily in that order. Apart from being born into an adoring family, getting good genes and inheriting the mineral rights, however, there are no short cuts. The rest of us have to work at it.

13. Help the dramatically self-pitying to understand that they are not, by definition, sympathetic or interesting. Encourage them to address topics other than themselves.

14. Be kind, not nice. Kindness is both intentional and meaningful. Acts of kindness requires generosity, emotional and otherwise. Perfunctory and superficial niceness is, too often, mere window-dressing.

15. Only poor workers blame their tools. It's not the fault of the computer, the school, the train, the government or poor cell phone reception. Take responsibility.

16. You know how sometimes you don't think you're asleep—you're half listening to a conversation or the television—only to discover you were unconscious? One part of your head would

By GINA BARRECA

The Hartford Courant

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swear it's awake, but when you actually snap out of it, you realize you were wholly elsewhere? Sometimes that happens in life. Sometimes the only way you know you're truly in love, in the entirely wrong profession, being a moron at parties or a great poet is when you snap out of it.

17. You can always stop what you're doing.

18. You should either be doing something useful or you should be playing. You should not be thinking about playing while at work or thinking about work when you're out having fun. Compartmentalizing your life is not inevitably a bad thing. It's easy to waste pleasure by feeling guilty and waste potentially effective time by feeling resentful.

19. Be aware that a safety net, if pulled too tight, easily turns into a noose. Don't trade independence for security without being aware of the consequences.

20. Someday you will die. Until then, you should do everything possible to enjoy life.

A new war on poverty is needed

It is time to declare war on poverty again.

Fifty years ago, President Lyndon Johnson said in his State of the Union address: "This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America. I urge this Congress and all Americans to join with me in that effort."

It was a moment of great leadership and hope at a precarious time in history. The war on poverty helped create Medicare and Medicaid. It also created the Office of Economic Opportunity that started the highly successful and still hugely popular Head Start preschool programs across the country. In Chicago alone, it provided funding for 57 preschool centers to serve poor children. It initiated food assistance and job training, and it launched literacy programs for adults. It spent more than \$20 million to provide 50,000 young people with summer jobs. It was a comprehensive and aggressive struggle that sought to touch every aspect of life for those suffering under poverty.

Contrary to the rhetoric over the years, the war on poverty was showing signs of success. When it began, the nation's poverty rate was 17 percent. In 10 years, the rate had dropped to 11 percent. But Congress gradually cut off funding for it. Poverty became entrenched again, and no such bold effort has been tried since that time.

A new war on poverty is needed today. The poverty rate is now at 15 percent. There are 46 million people in the United States still living in poverty. This includes 16 million children and more than 4 million senior citizens.

A new war on poverty should consist of the following: First, job training for the jobless and educational opportunities for those lacking financial resources to go to college could help millions permanently escape poverty. Second, temporary benefits such as the extension of unemployment benefits and food assistance could help families ride out these tough times. And third, higher wages for workers would also allow them to escape poverty.

By BRIAN GILMORE

Progressive Media Project

Brian Gilmore is a writer for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive magazine.








We can win the war on poverty. But we have to demand it. As Minnesota Sen. Eugene McCarthy stated in 1968 when the war on poverty starting fizzling out, the problem of poverty is "inseparable from the larger problem of democracy."

Let us use the democratic power that we have, as citizens, to resume this noble fight against poverty in the United States.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
				
Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	▲86 ▼76
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲86 ▼76
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲87 ▼77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲87 ▼77
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲87 ▼77
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲87 ▼77
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲87 ▼77

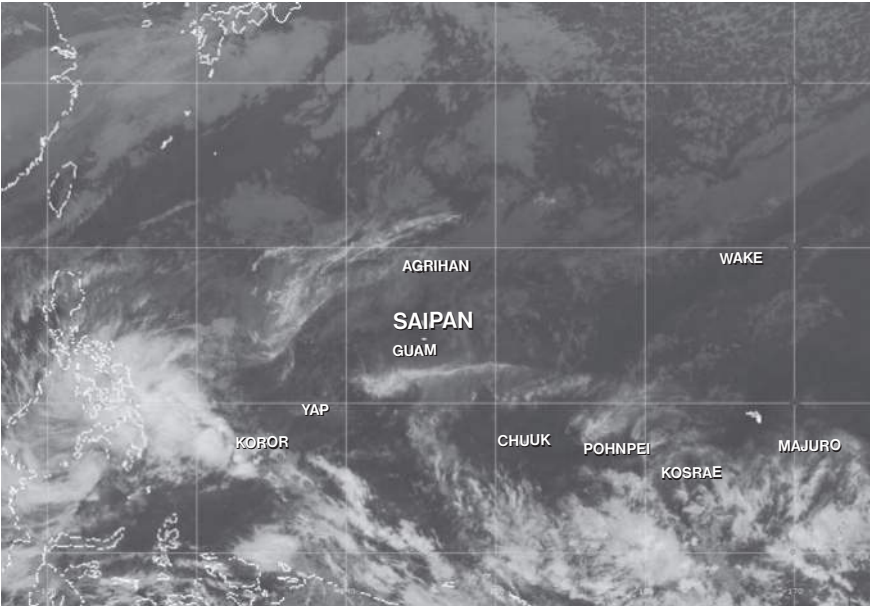
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲71 ▼62
Beijing	Sunny	▲37 ▼16
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲64 ▼54
Honolulu	Showers	▲83 ▼68
London	Mostly Sunny	▲47 ▼41
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲72 ▼48
Manila	Thundershowers	▲80 ▼73
Melbourne	Sunny	▲91 ▼62
Miami	Thundershowers	▲76 ▼66
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲45 ▼32
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲43 ▼34
Paris	Showers	▲49 ▼39
Pusan	Sunny	▲41 ▼27
Rome	Sunny	▲59 ▼46
Salem	Rain	▲50 ▼44
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲61 ▼43
Seoul	Sunny	▲29 ▼16
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲46 ▼31
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲52 ▼35

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
12:03 AM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.1 Feet
7:11 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
12:10 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
5:10 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from northeast of Wake Island through 25N173E to north of Wake at 22N167E, then continues as a shear line passing just north of Saipan at 16N146E to beyond 130E at 12N. Cloudiness and patchy rain are seen along and up to 160 miles northwest of the front. Scattered showers are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of the shear line. Trade-wind disturbances are causing scattered showers just east of Guam and Saipan within 60 miles of a line from 14N148E to 15N147E to 18N149E, and also southwest of Chuuk within 100 miles of a line from 9N144E to EQ153E. A near-equatorial trough runs southeastward from Mindanao through 5N130E to end south of Chuuk at EQ150E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:05 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:06 PM
Thursday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:45 PM	4:06 AM
Tuesday	4:34 PM	4:54 AM
Wednesday	5:23 PM	5:41 AM
Thursday	6:12 PM	6:26 AM
Friday	7:00 PM	7:08 AM

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- PICTURES**
 - ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 3, 2013

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) UA5070 4:15am 5:05am Daily UA5068 8:40am 9:30am Daily UA5039 1:35pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota UA5038 2:20pm 3:10pm 2, 3, 6 UA5078 6:05pm 6:55pm Daily UA5072 9:50pm 10:40pm Daily	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN UA5069 2:45am 3:35am Daily UA5071 7:15am 8:05am Daily UA5039 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5038 12:10pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6 via Rota UA5077 4:45pm 5:35pm Daily UA5079 8:30pm 9:20pm Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP) UA5039 1:35pm 2:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) UA5038 12:10pm 12:45pm 2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) UA5039 2:40pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN UA5038 1:15pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL297 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:55pm 1:30am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 D2102 2:20am 5:50am 3 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ6063 3:30am 7:20am 4, 7 (will increase eff Jan 29) D2104 2:00pm 5:30pm 6 OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN D2101 8:30am 2:00pm 3 OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily D2103 7:30pm 1:00am+1 6 OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 OZ6053 9:10pm 2:30am+1 3, 6 (will increase eff Jan 29)
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) MU764 4:00am 8:00am 1, 5	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN MU763 7:20pm 3:00am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5070/191 4:15am 9:05am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/473 6:00am 10:55pm Daily via NRT UA5068/PR111 8:40am 4:45pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:30pm 5 via Guam UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:50pm 1, 4, 7 via Guam UA5038/183 2:20pm 9:30pm 2 via GUM UA5078/183 6:05pm 9:50pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily PR110/UA5072 7:35am 5:35pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM DL172/288 7:45am 1:30am+1 Daily via NRT UA190/5077 9:55am 5:35pm 2, 7 via Guam UA190/5079 10:00am 5:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA184/5071 10:55pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 11:59pm 8:05am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5068/179 8:40am 10:35pm 1, 5 via GUM UA5038/179 2:20pm 10:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ724/605 1:50pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA180/5071 11:10pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 400				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily				
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

225 Guam Guard soldiers arriving today in Guam

About 225 members of the Guam Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment are scheduled to arrive in Guam today, Jan. 13, 2014.

The battalion was mobilized in August 2012 for deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan. The unit left Guam in March of last year for Camp Shelby, MS, where they completed mobilization training prior to arriving in theatre.

Task Force Guam, which is the largest group of reserve component troops to be mobilized and deployed from Guam, provided a vital security force mission. The nearly 600 soldiers, spread out in seven units,

Woman gets 48 mos. in prison for ID theft, bank fraud

Rosalina M.T. Gabutin, 45, was sentenced on Jan. 6, 2014, in the District Court of Guam to 48 months in federal prison followed by five years of supervised release for her conviction on multiple counts of bank fraud and aggravated identity theft. Gabutin was also ordered to pay \$49,017.17 to the victims of her criminal conduct.

Gabutin worked as an administrative assistant between 2009 and 2010 with Golden Formosa Jewelry International Guam, which rents commercial property. She stole rental payments from her employer's commercial tenants, forged checks, and negotiated them with financial institutions. She also forged her employer's signature on some of the checks.

Gabutin was also ordered to serve an additional 10 months in prison for a 2010 bank fraud case on account that she committed the above-referenced new bank fraud and aggravated identity theft crimes while she was on supervised release with the U.S. Probation Office for the prior case.

Alicia A.G. Limtiaco, U.S. Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, stated: "Identity theft and related white collar and financial fraud crimes victimize individuals, financial institutions and merchants. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands and the Department of Justice are committed to combating identity theft and other white collar and financial fraud crimes. We will continue to dedicate federal resources effectively to prevent, investigate and prosecute the unlawful use of identifying information. Federal and local law enforcement are committed to protecting our community and consumers against theft, fraud and other related criminal activity."

This case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service and was prosecuted by assistant U.S. attorney Marivic David. **(USAO)**

were located at key locations throughout Afghanistan.

For the arrival and to ease the reunion between returning soldiers and their families, there will be canopies set up and designated by the soldiers'

unit. Family members are encouraged to find their respective canopy to wait for their soldier.

Note that this is an outdoor event, is very windy at times, will be very hot and there are no covered areas, seating or drinks

provided; therefore, family members and the public should plan accordingly.

Additionally, airport officials are reminding the public that the area is an active runway and all in attendance must adhere to

federal regulations and comply with the following: No smoking or vaping (electronic cigarettes); no alcohol; no animals; no hats; no balloons or any items that might be released into the air and become a hazard or danger

to the aircrafts.

For information on the arrival, to find out if your soldier is on that plane or what unit they are attached to, the public may contact the Battalion's Rear Detachment at 735-4661. **(PR)**

Camacho promoted to lieutenant colonel in US Army

Lawrence Fejeran Camacho, one of the few CNMI individuals currently serving as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army, was promoted to lieutenant colonel effective Jan. 1, 2014.

Camacho's 16 years of distinguished military service includes a variety of operational assignments, overseas tours, and a vast military and civilian education. He received his active duty commission into the U.S. Army upon his graduation from the University of Guam in 1997. Upon his graduation from the Ordnance Officer Basic Course at Redstone Arsenal, AL, in 1998 he was assigned to the Regimental Support Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Polk, LA where he served as platoon leader, combat equipment production control officer, and regimental supply management officer. While assigned to the regiment, he deployed with Task Force Eagle and NATO Forces in sup-

port of Operation Joint Guard in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In 2001, upon his graduation from the Combined Logistics Officer Advanced Course at Fort Lee, VA, and the Combined Arms Staff Services School at Fort Leavenworth, KS, Camacho was assigned to the Division Support Command and 15th Forward Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, TX, where he served as brigade material readiness officer and then as company commander. In 2004, as the commanding officer of 250 soldiers he deployed his unit into combat operations in Iraq and provided sustainment support to the Blackjack Brigade (mechanized), particularly during the intense battle to retake Fallujah under coalition control; the coalition's fight for Najaf against Muktda Al-Sadr's Army; as well as securing the North Babil and surrounding districts in Baghdad in order to set conditions for Iraq's his-

toric first national election.

In 2005, Camacho was assigned to Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, GA, where he served as assistant professor of Military Science and Leadership. In 2007, he was assigned to 501st Sustainment Brigade at Camp Carroll, South Korea where he served as Combat Fleet Readiness Officer in support of units throughout the South Korea Peninsula. Upon his graduation from the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS, in 2009 he was assigned to 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Benning, GA, where he served as brigade logistics officer and then a brigade support operations officer during deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom VII/Operation New Dawn.

He is currently assigned to the U.S. Central Command, serving at the American Embassy in Cairo, Egypt, as chief of

Land Forces Branch, Office of Military Cooperation. Camacho is earmarked for reassignment in February 2014 to the 7th Sustainment Brigade at Fort Eustis, VA, where he will serve as the sustainment brigade support operations officer.

Camacho's military education includes Command and General Staff College; Combined Arms Staff Services School; Combined Logistics Officer Advance Course; Ordnance Officer Basic Course; Faculty Development Course; Support Operations Officer Course; Defense Institute for Security Assistance Management.

His civilian education includes a master's in Leadership and Liberal Studies, Duquesne University; master's in Military Arts and Science in History, Command and General Staff College; a bachelor's in Public Administration, University of Guam; and associate degree in Business Management, Pasadena City College.

Camacho's awards and decorations include: Bronze Star

Medal (two awards); Defense Meritorious Service Medal; Meritorious Service Medal (three awards); Army Commendation Medal (two awards); National Defense Service Medal (one star); Joint Forces Expeditionary Medal; Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal; Armed Forces Service Medal; Iraqi Campaign Medal (two campaign stars); Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Korea Defense Service Medal; Army Service Ribbon; Overseas Service Ribbon (number four); and the NATO Medal. He is a recipient of the Combat Action Badge.

He is the son of Luis B. and Ursula F. (deceased) Camacho of San Roque and is married to Gina Duenas Camacho, daughter of Ben C. and Annie DLG. Duenas of Chalan Kiya. They have three children: Vince Lui, Gregory Jacob, and Tamara Ann. Vince Lui is an active-duty first lieutenant serving in the 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, NY, while Gregory Jacob is an Army specialist serving in the Alabama National Guard. **(PR)**



DAILY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

A vendor cooks the local delicacy called *apigigi* at the Garapan Street Market on Thursday in Garapan.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Inos supports implementation of WOTC

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit enables employers to claim tax credits provided all requirements are met under the provisions of the federal tax credit such as the timely filing of the tax forms with the State Workforce Agency and the hiring of individuals within the specified qualified target populations.

The call under U.S. Public

Law 110-229 to transition foreign workers out of the CNMI presents an opportunity for employers to start looking into the benefits of the WOTC, an initiative backed by Gov. Eloy S. Inos. The CNMI DOL Workforce Investment Agency Division is tasked to take the lead for this implementation and is also working closely with the CNMI

Revenue and Tax Office.

Congress has legislative authority for all WOTC target groups, which most recently expired on Dec. 31, 2013. As a result, the program is currently undergoing an authorization lapse and thus requires legislative approval or reauthorization by Congress for certification of eligibility. Despite the current

lapse, the USDOL Employment and Training Administration has issued a guidance (TEGL 8-13) to all State Workforce Agencies to accept, date stamp, log, and retain certification requests for employers' new hires made on or after Jan. 1, 2014, until informed otherwise by USDOL ETA. Under the same guidance, states may not issue eligibility certifications unless the program is reauthorized by Congress. They may however

issue Conditional Certifications with ETA Form 9062.

Employers are encouraged to visit the IRS site at www.irs.gov to learn more about the WOTC and other required forms for downloading that will be necessary for filing with the SWA and CNMI Revenue and Tax Office should the US Congress approve legislation to reauthorize the WOTC. The WOTC credit is also listed under NMTIT section 51. **(Office of the Governor)**

Business

Comic book shop opens in Garapan

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Retired math teacher Glenn D. Keaton always had a soft spot for comic books. The first comics he bought was Amazing Spider-man #50, which he recalls was the first appearance of the character Kingpin.

It took a trip to Dubai a couple of years back, however, that convinced him to finally pursue his lifelong dream of opening a comic book shop on Saipan. Green Flash Comics Cards and Collectibles became a reality in November 2013.

"It's been an idea that had been formulated before. I went to Abu Dhabi and there was the first annual comic book convention in Dubai and it was very successful," he said.

While opening a comic book shop in the United Arab Emirates did cross his mind, Keaton decided to initially test the waters on Saipan, where he first moved in 2002 to teach at the Northern Marianas College.

"I want to eventually open a comic store in Dubai but I first want to learn the ins and outs of the business. I want to get the business here going and learn all the ropes. It's basically my passion. I really want to do this for two reasons: I want to succeed here and I want to expand to Dubai."

Green Flash Comics, which is on the second floor of the old MITA Travel building across the TSL Plaza in Garapan, carries comic book titles that range from the ever-popular Marvel and Avenger series, to X-Men, Archie, and a sprinkling of anime titles.

"A lot of people like it and are very excited. They come from all walks of life and from little kids all the way up," Keaton said.

The shop houses approximately 7,000 comic titles, not counting the 2,000 titles in his personal collection. They range in price from \$4.99 for the typical comic books to \$140 for a Batman #167 rated at a grade of 8.5.

Aside from his personal stash on island, Keaton said his prized collection of comic books is safely tucked at his parent's house in Washington. The current retail price of his collection in the states: \$300,000.

He said he tries not to impose his preferences on customers who drop by at Green Flash Comics.

"The way I envision the comic store is I talk to the customers and they tell me what they want. First I picked the popular ones from a cata-



Owner Glenn D. Keaton mans the counter at Green Flash Comics Cards and Collectibles in Garapan.

log but every now and then I bring in something that's not so popular here like the last time I brought in, which is Lazarus. I will probably bring in Fanboys vs Zombies and Grimm Fairy Tales next," he said.

Keaton said comics have also evolved with the advent of computers and the Internet, adding that most comics nowadays come with digital codes that allow readers to have a more multimedia experience by logging online.

"Some people try to read comics online but they still want the old feel of an old comic book. You don't just appreciate it because of the art but also because of the story. I buy comics not to rekindle my childhood. I just happen to like the story and the artwork. I actually stopped reading for a while. I want to read them because there's a comic culture out there where you to talk to fellow comics enthusiasts."

Comic book lovers, he said,



Aside from 7,000 comic book titles, the newly opened comic book shop also sells action figures and other collectibles.

United Airlines makes major investments at SF airport

CHICAGO—United Airlines and its partners at San Francisco International Airport are preparing to open the newly renovated Boarding Area E in Terminal 3, which will provide United customers ultra-modern, flyer-friendly conveniences that elevate their travel experience.

Scheduled to re-open Jan. 28, the 68,800-square-foot boarding area will reflect the airport's status as the nation's premier West Coast aviation hub. Designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, Boarding Area E will offer 10 gates for United customers and will be able to accommodate more than 50 departures each day.

Boarding Area E will offer an up-close view of the airfield and the Bay Area from a 23-foot-high window wall. Customers will enjoy several other amenities, including:

- The "Flight Deck"—an interactive information and entertainment area for guests to enjoy and explore
- Comfortable seating op-

- Boarding Area E set to re-open this month with modern, sustainable design
- Airline appoints vice president of SFO hub; planning additional terminal investments

tions that include the iconic Fritz Hansen "egg" chairs and swivel lounge chairs

- Dining and concession options from Bay Area vendors, such as Klein's Deli
- Complimentary Wi-Fi
- Nine state-of-the-art workstations and access to more than 375 power outlets
- A yoga room
- An interactive kids' play area designed by Bay Area artist Eric Staller

"We're pleased to work with San Francisco International Airport on the redesign of Boarding Area E, which is focused on our customers and the things they've told us are important," said Kate Gebo, United's vice president of corporate real estate. "United continues to modernize our terminal facilities, United Club lounges and gate areas, to offer customers a

simpler, friendlier airport experience."

Additional Investments

United is making other investments in Terminal 3, including a new reception area for the airline's Global Services customers and a new check-in area for MileagePlus Premier customers, both scheduled to open in September.

Also:

- United recently began construction of a new Station Operations Center, from which the airline manages its departures, arrivals and customer service at the airport. The center is scheduled to open in April.

- United anticipates moving its existing Terminal 1 Boarding Area B operations to Terminal 3 by mid-May, simplifying connections for

customers.

- A new United Club is scheduled to open during the summer of 2015.

San Francisco leadership

Additionally, United announced it has appointed Mike Hanna, the airline's managing director of San Francisco operations and customer service, to the position of vice president, underscoring the importance of the San Francisco hub.

Since Hanna assumed leadership of the hub in May 2012, United's operational performance has improved significantly, with baggage-handling reliability up 25 percent in 2013 versus 2012, and "controllable delays"—those not attributed, for example, to inclement weather—down nearly 50 percent for mainline flights and more than 40 percent for regional flights. Satisfaction among San Francisco customers, as measured from post-travel surveys, has increased six-fold since mid-2012.

United at San Francisco International Airport

United is the largest carrier at San Francisco International Airport, offering nearly 300 daily flights to 90 destinations worldwide, more than any other airline from the Bay Area. From its San Francisco hub, United also offers more nonstop trans-Pacific service to and from the United States than any other airline. With nearly 30 daily nonstop flights to 20 international destinations, United will add two more international destinations from San Francisco this year, when it begins nonstop service to Taipei, Taiwan, in March and to Chengdu, China, in June.

About United

United Airlines and United Express operate an average of more than 5,300 flights a day to more than 360 airports across six continents. In 2012, United and United Express carried more passenger traffic than any other airline in the world and operated nearly two million flights. For more information, visit united.com. (United)

Nation

Neiman Marcus is latest victim of security breach

NEW YORK (AP)—Luxury merchant Neiman Marcus confirmed Saturday that thieves stole some of its customers' payment card information and made unauthorized charges over the holiday season, becoming the second retailer in recent weeks to announce it had fallen victim to a cyber-security attack.

The hacking, coming weeks after Target Corp. revealed its own breach, underscores the increasing challenges that merchants have in thwarting security threats. Neiman Marcus didn't say whether the breach was related to the massive data theft at Target, but some secu-

rity experts believe they could be part of the same scam. Nevertheless, the recent security breaches at two major retailers threaten to scare shoppers who worry about the safety of their personal data.

Ginger Reeder, spokeswoman for Dallas-based Neiman Marcus Group Ltd., said in an email Saturday that the retailer had been notified in mid-December by its credit card processor about potentially unauthorized payment activity following customer purchases at stores. On Jan. 1, a forensics firm confirmed evidence that the upscale retailer was a victim of a criminal cyber-security intrusion and

that some customers' credit and debit cards were possibly compromised as a result.

Reeder wouldn't estimate how many customers may be affected but said the merchant is notifying customers whose cards it has now determined were used fraudulently. Neiman Marcus, which operates more than 40 upscale stores and clearance stores, is working with the Secret Service on the breach, she said.

"We have begun to contain the intrusion and have taken significant steps to further enhance information security," Reeder wrote.

Robert Siciliano, a security

expert with McAfee, a computer security software maker, says it is possible Neiman Marcus doesn't yet know the extent of the breach. He says he believes that the two thefts were likely committed by the same organized group, based on his experience and the fact that the incidents happened at around the same time.

"It's a knee-jerk reaction that

the security industry has right now," he added.

Target disclosed Friday that its massive data theft was significantly more extensive and affected millions more shoppers than the company announced in December. The nation's second largest discounter said hackers stole personal information—including names, phone numbers, email

and mailing addresses—from as many as 70 million customers as part of a data breach it discovered last month.

The Minneapolis-based Target announced Dec. 19 that some 40 million credit and debit card accounts had been affected by a data breach that happened from Nov. 27 to Dec. 15—just as the holiday shopping season was getting into gear.

Black rhino hunting permit auctioned for \$350,000

DALLAS (AP)—A permit to hunt an endangered African black rhino sold for \$350,000 at a Dallas auction held to raise money for conservation efforts but criticized by wildlife advocates.

Steve Wagner, a spokesman for the Dallas Safari Club, which sponsored the closed-door event Saturday night, confirmed the sale of the permit for a hunt in the African nation of Namibia. He declined to name the buyer.

The Safari Club's executive director, Ben Carter, has defended the auction, saying all money raised will go toward protecting the species. He also said the rhino that the winner will be allowed to hunt is old, male and nonbreeding—and that the animal was likely to be targeted for removal any-

way because it was becoming aggressive and threatening other wildlife.

But the auction drew howls from critics, including wildlife and animal rights groups, and the FBI said it was investigating death threats against members of the club.

Officials from the Humane Society and the International Fund for Animal Welfare have said that while culling can be appropriate in abundant animal populations, all black rhinos should be protected, given their endangered status.

An estimated 4,000 black rhinos remain in the wild, down from 70,000 in the 1960s. Nearly 1,800 are in Namibia, according to the Safari Club.

Critics have also said any

hunting of a rhino sends a bad message to the public.

"This auction is telling the world that an American will pay anything to kill their species," Jeffrey Flocken, North American regional director of the Massachusetts-based IFAW, said this past week. "This is, in fact, making a spectacle of killing an endangered species."

The auction took place in downtown Dallas under tight security. Organizers hoped to at least break the previous high bid for one of the permits in Namibia, which was \$223,000, and had said the amount could be as high as \$1 million. The nation offers five permits each year, and the one auctioned Saturday was the first to be made available for purchase outside of Namibia.

Brother describes finding sibling's plane wreckage

BOISE, Idaho (AP)—When Dellon Smith spotted the wreckage of his older brother's airplane on the side of a central Idaho mountain, he started running.

"It's hard to sprint in snowshoes, but we did," Smith said Saturday, a day after finding the snow-covered aircraft on a steep slope at about 7,500 feet, bringing an end to a six-week search. "I just wanted to run as fast as I could, and I knew it was a very sacred place to me."

After covering the 200 feet to the aircraft, he asked the rest of the 12-member search team to give him a few minutes alone at the site where a light snow was falling.

"You're just overwhelmed," he said. "You're just so happy to have found it, yet you're so sad because you found it. I just enjoyed the peace of being there, and finally getting answers for

our whole family."

Bad weather Saturday morning turned back a recovery team attempting to reach the wreckage of the small aircraft that went down in early December, killing 51-year-old pilot Dale Smith, a Silicon Valley executive, and four of his family members.

There were no plans to make another attempt Sunday, but a meeting will be held Monday to consider options for reaching the remote crash site and removing the five bodies, Valley County Sheriff Patti Bolen said.

She said snowmobiles will be needed to reach the area, and various routes in the rugged terrain are being considered. She didn't rule out the use of a helicopter.

The aircraft had been carrying Dale Smith, a software executive from San Jose, Calif.; his son, Daniel Smith and his wife, Sheree Smith; and

daughter Amber Smith with her fiancé, Jonathan Norton, officials said.

The plane was flying from eastern Oregon, where the family had been spending the Thanksgiving holiday, to Montana, where Daniel and Sheree Smith live, when it disappeared Dec. 1 in the mountains 150 miles northeast of Boise.

Dellon Smith, 38, a cargo pilot based in Anchorage, Alaska, and one of three brothers, found the crash site at about 2 p.m. Friday. A large, tracked vehicle carried the search team into the backcountry, where they spread out. He said he tried to take in the scene to determine how the crash might have happened, adding it appeared to have been a violent impact.

"It was very sudden," he said. "Since they were in the clouds, they probably didn't know what hit them. Probably a couple seconds and it was over. There was no pain and suffering for our family members, and for that we're very grateful."



Dale Smith



AP

City officials help direct traffic through a water distribution site set up at the South Charleston Recreation Center in South Charleston, W.Va., Friday, Jan. 10, 2014, after at least 100,000 customers in nine West Virginia counties were told not to drink, bathe, cook or wash clothes using their tap water because of a chemical spill into the Elk River in Charleston, with Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin declaring a state of emergency Thursday for all those areas.

CHARLESTON, W.Va.

(AP)—On the third day without clean tap water, business owners with empty dining rooms and quiet aisles of merchandise around West Virginia's capital were left to wonder how much of an economic hit they'll take from a chemical spill.

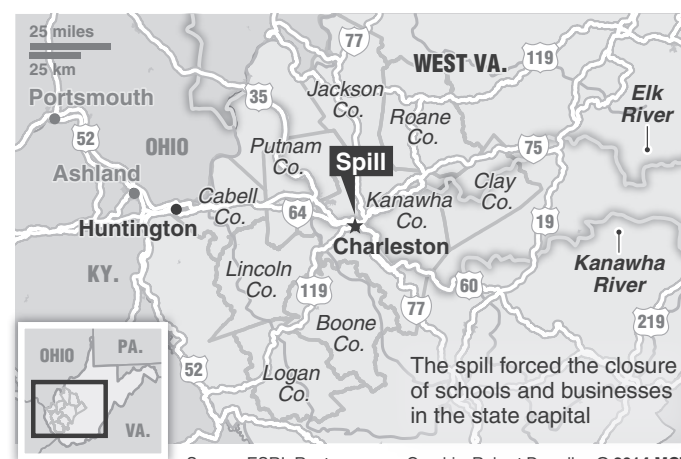
Most visitors have cleared out of Charleston while locals are either staying home or driving out of the area to find somewhere they can get a hot meal or a shower. Orders not to use tap water for much other than flushing toilets mean that the spill is an emergency not just for the environment but also for local businesses.

A water company executive said Saturday that it could be days before uncontaminated water is flowing again for about 300,000 people in nine West Virginia counties. The uncertainty means it's impossible to estimate the economic impact of the spill yet, said the leader of the local chamber of commerce.

Virtually every restaurant was closed Saturday, unable to use water to prepare food, wash dishes or clean employees' hands. Meanwhile, hotels had emptied and foot traffic was

Chemical spill taints water

The spill of a chemical called 4-Methylcyclohexane Methanol from a holding tank in Charleston, W.V., has left up to 300,000 area residents in nine counties without tap water.



down at many retail stores.

"I haven't been able to cook anything at home and was hoping they were open," Bill Rogers, 52, said outside a closed Tudor's Biscuit World in Marmet, just east of Charleston. "It seems like every place is closed. It's frustrating. Really frustrating."

In downtown Charleston, the Capitol Street row of restaurants and bars were locked up. Amid them, The Consignment Company was open, but business was miserable. The sec-

ond-hand shop's owner said she relies on customers who come downtown to eat and drink.

"It's like a ghost town," Tammy Krepschaw said. "I feel really bad for all my neighbors. It's sad."

The person she doesn't feel bad for is Freedom Industries President Gary Southern, who told reporters the day before that he was having a long day and quickly wrapped up a news conference on the chemical spill so he could fly out of the area.

Asia

Philippines, Vietnam condemn China's fishing law

By TERESA CERAJANO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines and Vietnam condemned a new Chinese law that requires foreign fishermen to seek Beijing's approval to operate in much of the South China Sea, but China's Foreign Ministry insisted it has the right to do so.

China's assertiveness in pressing its claims in the strategic waters, which are believed to have significant seabed gas and oil deposits, has unnerved its smaller neighbors and created a potential military flash point. Anger is especially acute in the Philippines

and Vietnam, which believe they have strong claims on waters off their shores.

■ ■ ■ ■

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. says new restrictions by Chinese authorities on other countries' fishermen in the disputed South China Sea are "provocative and potentially dangerous."

The regulations, which took effect this month, require foreign fishermen to ask China's permission to operate within most of the vast, strategic waterway.

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said Thurs-

day that the regulations appear to apply to extensive maritime claims for which China has not offered any explanation or basis under international law.

The affected waters cover much of the South China Sea, an area encompassing island groups also claimed by Vietnam, the Philippines and others.

It follows China's late November announcement of a new air defense zone requiring foreign planes to notify Beijing of flights over a huge swath of the East China Sea.

■ ■ ■ ■

The Philippine Department of

Foreign Affairs said in a statement Friday that the new Chinese regulation "escalates tensions, unnecessarily complicates the situation in the South China Sea, and threatens the peace and stability of the region."

Vietnamese Foreign Ministry spokesman Luong Thanh Nghi said the law and other moves by China in recent months are "illegal and invalid" and seriously violate Vietnam's sovereignty.

"Vietnam demands that China abolish the above said erroneous acts, and practically contribute to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region," he said.

Chinese Foreign Ministry

spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Friday that there was no change to existing regulations but a technical amendment.

"There is no need at all to reinforce China's long-standing and clear claim of rights and interests over the South China Sea by passing a local regulation," Hua said.

"There is nothing wrong with the law and the regulation," she said. "It is because those who read into the law adopted a wrong mindset."

The Philippines said it asked China for clarification. It said the regulation, which took effect this month, reinforces China's expansive territorial claims and violates international law, particularly the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. It also said the rule was contrary to a 2002 declaration that China signed with the 10-member Association of the Southeast Asian Nations, including the Philippines and Vietnam, to refrain from changing the status quo.

The Philippines and Vietnam are among the most vocal critics of China's claims over virtually the entire South China Sea, which infringe on their own 200-mile (322-kilometer) exclusive economic zones. China and other claimants have beefed up their navies and stepped up patrols around island groups also claimed by others, increasing the risk of confrontation.

The U.S. has also criticized China's move, calling it "provocative and potentially dangerous."

But China on Friday asked the United States to stay out, as Beijing prefers negotiations with individual countries. "If the U.S. really wants to safeguard regional peace and stability, it should respect and support relevant countries' efforts to solve problems through direct dialogues and negotiation," Hua said.

Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan also claim parts of the South China Sea, which is an important global shipping route.

Thai road protest could lead to political dead end

BANGKOK (AP)—Anti-government protesters are planning to shut down Thailand's capital on Monday by blocking traffic at key intersections, providing a fitting metaphor for the country's politics: no way forward, no backing out.

"Crisis Deepens," read a big headline in the Bangkok Post newspaper. "Poll boycott draws nation into uncharted territory."

That was Feb. 28, 2006, when then-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was seeking to defuse protests against his rule by calling early elections, and the opposition Democrat Party refused to take part. In September that year, the army deposed Thaksin in a coup.

Eight years later, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra—billionaire Thaksin's sister—has called early elections to defuse anti-government protests, and the opposition Democrat Party is again boycotting the polls.

The protesters planning to tie up traffic in Bangkok on Monday are demanding that Yingluck and her caretaker government step down and freeze elections for up to two years, during which time an interim "People's Council"—which they apparently would appoint—would implement reforms to fight corruption and put an end to money politics.

Tensions are high, with eight people killed over the past two months in connection with the protests. The demonstrators have engaged in running street battles with police, cut off water and electricity to national police headquarters, and forcibly occupied the compounds of several other government agencies. Several drive-by shootings have taken place near their main en-

campment, the latest one leaving seven protesters injured Saturday morning.

The demonstrators' slogan is "Reform before election," but their agenda really is "Stop Thaksin, again." It reflects the reality that Yingluck is acting as a stand-in for her brother, who is calling the shots from exile, where he fled in 2008 to avoid a jail term for a corruption conviction.

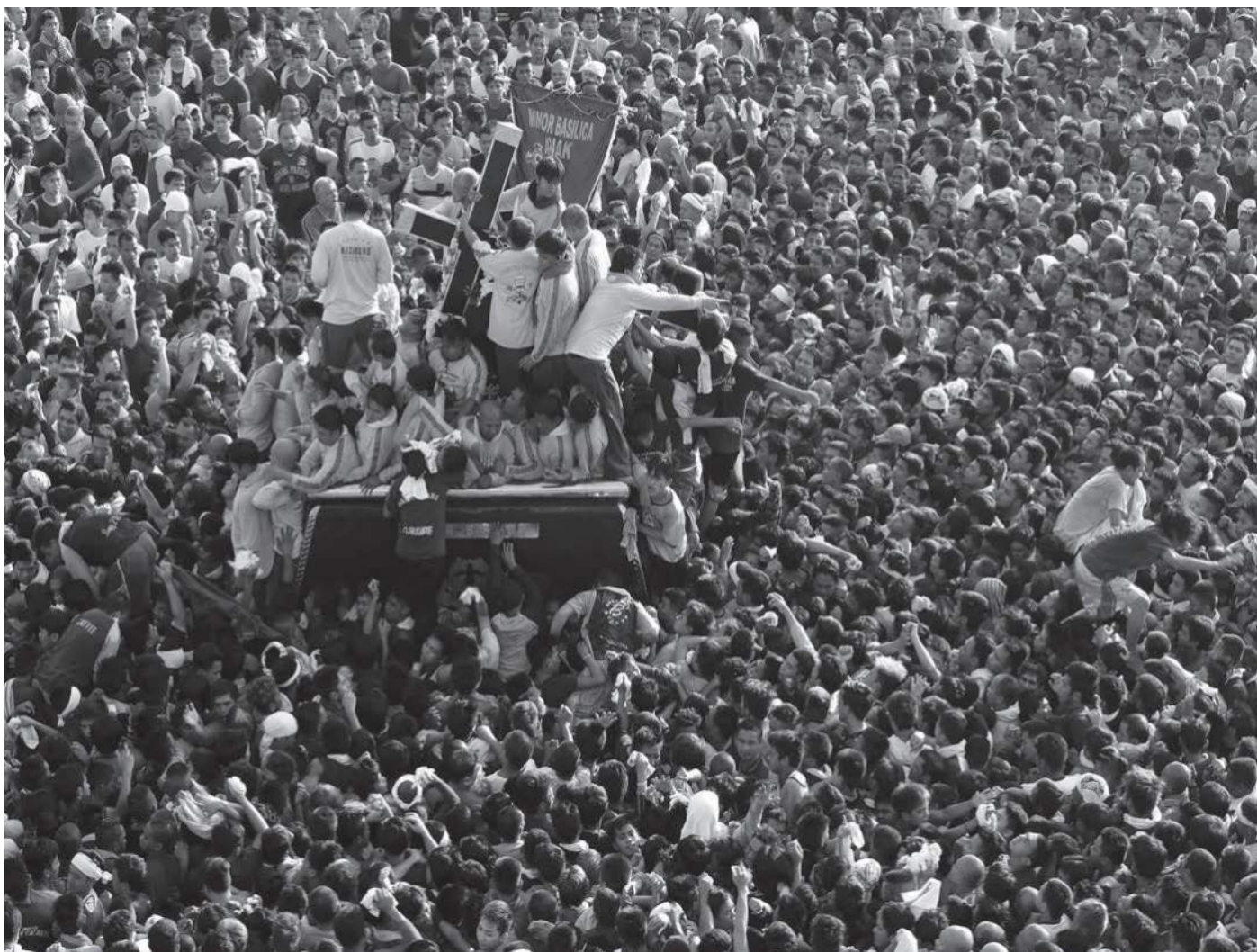
The political crisis could play out several ways.

One scenario is a military coup. The protesters—headed by the so-called People's Democratic Reform Committee—clearly hope to trigger enough chaos to force the army to take over to restore order.

The military is noted for having staged about a dozen successful coups since Thailand became a constitutional monarchy in 1932. As recently as Tuesday, army commander Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha refused to rule out the possibility of another.

The 2006 coup against Thaksin was a bloodless one, but it was followed up by an inept interim government and triggered the violent polarization that has dogged Thai politics ever since.

Another possibility for the current crisis is a so-called judicial coup. Several cases are pending in the courts and the country's independent oversight agencies—all tilting heavily against the Shinawatras' political machine—that could see Yingluck's party thrown out of office and its members barred from politics. The key bodies are stacked with figures who were opposed to Thaksin and appointed by the unelected government after the 2006 coup.



SEA OF DEVOTEES

Filipino Catholic devotees, right, walk on a sea of devotees after managing to touch and kiss the image of the Black Nazarene in an annual procession to celebrate its feast day Thursday, Jan. 9, 2014 in Manila, Philippines. Hundreds of thousands of Filipino Catholics began a raucous religious procession in Manila Thursday to honor a centuries-old black statue of Jesus Christ in an annual event that organizers say was being held partly to pray for the victims of a monster typhoon that devastated the central Philippines last year.

AP

Fire destroys ancient Tibetan town in SW China

BEIJING (AP)—A fire that raged for nearly 10 hours Saturday razed an ancient Tibetan town in southwest China that's popular with tourists, burning down hundreds of buildings as fire engines were unable to get onto the narrow streets, state media and witnesses said.

There was no immediate report of any casualties, and the cause of the fire was not yet known. State media, citing local authorities, said the blaze started in a guesthouse and was ruled accidental.

The fire broke out at about 1:30 a.m. in the ancient Tibetan quarter of Dukezong, which dates back more than 1,000 years and is known for

its preserved cobbled streets, ancient structures and Tibetan culture. Dukezong is part of scenic Shangri-La county in Degen prefecture.

Once called Gyaitang Zong, the county renamed itself Shangri-La in 2001, hoping to draw tourists by the reference to the mythical Himalayan land described in James Hilton's 1933 novel. Like hundreds of Chinese cities and counties, Shangri-La renovated its old neighborhood, Dukezong, turning it into a tourist attraction filled with shops and guesthouses.

Photos and video footage showed Dukezong and its labyrinth of houses engulfed

in flames that turned the night sky red.

The fire destroyed about 242 houses and shops in Dukezong, dislocated more than 2,600 people, and torched many historic artifacts, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

He Yu, a resident, said she woke to loud, explosion-like sounds to find the old town on fire.

"The fire was huge," she said. "The wind was blowing hard, and the air was dry. I was scared because my home is a little distance away from the ancient town. It kept burning, and the firefighters were there, but there was little

they could do because they could not get the fire engines onto the old town's narrow streets."

With fire engines kept out, local residents lined up to pass buckets of water to combat the fire, the Degen prefecture government said.

Most of Dukezong's buildings are made of wood and the fire spread easily because of dry weather, state-run China Central Television said.

More than 2,000 firefighters, soldiers, police, local officials and volunteers responded to the blaze and brought it under control at around 11 a.m., the Shangri-La county government said.

World

Sharon, Israel's bulldozer in politics, dies at 85

JERUSALEM (AP)—It was vintage Ariel Sharon: His hefty body bobbing behind a wall of security men, the ex-general led a march onto a Jerusalem holy site, staking a bold claim to a shrine that has been in contention from the dawn of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

What followed was a Palestinian uprising that put Mideast peace efforts into deep-freeze.

Five years later, Sharon, who died Saturday at 85, was again barreling headlong into controversy, bulldozing ahead with his plan to pull Israel out of the Gaza Strip and uproot all 8,500 Jewish settlers living there without regard to threats to his life from Jewish extremists.

His allies said the move was a revolutionary step in peacemaking; his detractors said it was a tactical sacrifice to strengthen Israel's hold on much of the West Bank.

Either way, the withdrawal and the barrier he was building between Israel and the West Bank permanently changed the face of the conflict and marked

the final legacy of a man who shaped Israel as much as any other leader. He was a farmer-turned-soldier, a soldier-turned-politician, a politician-turned-statesman—a hard-charging Israeli who built Jewish settlements on war-won land, but didn't shy away from destroying them when he deemed them no longer useful.

Sharon died eight years after a debilitating stroke put him into a coma. His body was to lie in state at the parliament on Sunday before he is laid to rest at his ranch in southern Israel on Monday, Israeli media reported. Vice President Joe Biden will lead the U.S. delegation.

His death was greeted with the same strong feelings he evoked in life. Israelis called him a war hero. His enemies called him a war criminal.

President Barack Obama remembered Sharon as “a leader who dedicated his life to the state of Israel.”

Former President George W. Bush, who was in the White House during Sharon's tenure, called him a “warrior for the



In this Wednesday Feb. 7, 2001 file photo, Ariel Sharon, then Israel's Prime Minister-elect, looks up as he touches Judaism holiest site, the Western Wall, in Jerusalem. AP

ages and a partner in seeking security for the Holy Land and a better, peaceful Middle East.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a rival and harsh critic of Sharon, said: “His memory will be enshrined forever in the heart of the nation.”

President Shimon Peres, a longtime friend and rival, said “he was an outstanding man and an exceptional commander who moved his people and loved them and the people loved him.”

The Palestinians, who loathed Sharon as their most bitter enemy, distributed candy, prayed for divine punishment and said they regretted he was never held accountable for his actions, including a massacre in the Lebanese refugee camps of Sabra and Chatilla by Christian militiamen allied with Israel during the 1982 invasion that was largely his brainchild.

“He wanted to erase the Pal-

estinian people from the map ... He wanted to kill us, but at the end of the day, Sharon is dead and the Palestinian people are alive,” said Tawfik Tirawi, who served as Palestinian intelligence chief when Sharon was prime minister.

The man Israel knew simply by his nickname “Arik” fought in most of Israel's wars, gained a reputation as an adroit soldier and was the godfather of Israel's massive settlement campaign in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He detested Yasser Arafat, his lifelong adversary, as an “obstacle to peace” and was in turn detested in the Arab world.

His career spanned the Middle East conflict from its early skirmishes through five wars, one of which left him hailed as his nation's savior, and another reviled as its disgrace.

He was a lifelong opponent of concessions to the Arabs who

ended up giving away land and offering the Palestinians a state of their own.

His was a life of surprises, none bigger than his election as prime minister in his twilight years, when he spent his first term crushing a Palestinian uprising and his second withdrawing from Gaza. The pullout in 2005 freed 1.3 million Palestinians from Israeli military rule and left his successors the vague outline of his proposal for a final peace settlement with Israel's Arab foes.

After the Gaza withdrawal, Sharon shattered Israel's long-standing political divisions by leaving Likud, the hard-line party he had helped found three decades earlier. He created a new centrist party, called Kadima, or Forward, to support his efforts to reach a deal with the Palestinians and draw Israel's permanent borders. The party

Former
prime
minister
of Israel

**Ariel
Sharon**

Early life

Born 1928 in Kfar, Mala, British Palestine

Family Twice widowed, three children (one deceased)

Rising in the ranks

1950s Leads special forces team targeting Palestinian militias

1967 Commands armored division in Six-Day War

1973 Elected Knesset member for the Likud party

1970s, 80s As government minister, leads push to build dozens of Jewish settlements in West Bank and Gaza Strip

1990-99 Foreign, housing, infrastructure minister, representing the Likud party

Leading Israel

2001 Elected prime minister; orders military attacks on Palestinians

Aug. 2005 Announces disengagement plan; dismantles settlements from Gaza and from West Bank

Nov. 2005 Resigns from Likud party amid growing dissent over withdrawal from Gaza; forms new party, Kadima

2006 Suffers massive stroke

2014 Dies after spending 8 years in a coma

© 2014 MCT
Source: BBC, NPR, MCT Photo Service

was cruising toward victory in upcoming elections when Sharon suffered his stroke.

The stroke and extended coma set off one of the strangest periods in Israel's political history. While his deputy, Ehud Olmert, quickly assumed office and led Kadima to victory in a subsequent, Sharon remained a visible presence.

500 reportedly killed in rebel infighting in Syria

BEIRUT (AP)—With nearly 500 people reported killed in a week of rebel infighting, many Syrians barricaded themselves in their homes Friday, while others emerged from mosques angrily accusing an al-Qaida-linked group of hijacking their revolution.

The rebel-on-rebel clashes have overshadowed the battle against President Bashar Assad and underscore the perils for civilians caught in the crossfire of two parallel wars.

The violence, which pits fighters from a variety of Islamic groups and mainstream factions against the feared al-Qaida-linked Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, have spread across four provinces in opposition-held parts of northern Syria.

The infighting is helping Assad, whose forces have clawed back some of the ground lost to the rebels in recent months as they bombard the north and other opposition regions with warplanes, heavy artillery and crude explosive-filled barrels dropped over rebel neighborhoods.

“The revolution has been derailed,” said Abdullah Hasan, a self-described secular activist in the northern town of Maskaneh, where fighters from the al-Qaida-linked group swept in last month. “None of the groups fighting in Syria represent me now,” he said, adding that he

was nonetheless hopeful that the infighting would help purge extremists from the ranks of the rebels.

The latest bout of violence broke out a week ago across northern Syria and is the most serious among opponents of Assad since the civil war began.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Friday that at least 482 people have been killed in the infighting since Jan. 3. It said 157 were from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, 240 from more moderate factions and 85 were civilians.

The death toll mirrors and even exceeds casualties from the broader war between government forces and the rebels in the same time frame. The Observatory, which documents casualties on a daily basis through a network of activists on the ground, has recorded 385 people killed between Jan. 3 and Jan. 9 in fighting between rebels and government forces. But casualties among soldiers are difficult to track down and are often under reported.

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and another al-Qaida-linked group known as Jabhat al-Nusra, or the Nusra Front, initially joined forces with moderate rebels fighting to oust Assad in a conflict that began in March 2011 as a popular uprising but morphed into a civil war.

Iraq: At least 60 killed in 2 weeks Anbar violence

BAGHDAD (AP)—Fighting between security forces and al-Qaida-linked militants in Iraq's Sunni-dominated Anbar province has killed at least 60 people over the past two weeks, an official said Saturday.

The head of Anbar's Health Directorate, Khudeir Shalal, said that 43 people were killed in the city of Ramadi and other 17 were killed in Fallujah since violence erupted in the western province after the Dec. 28 arrest of a Sunni lawmaker sought on terrorism charges and the dismantling of an anti-government Sunni protest camp in Ramadi.

Shalal said a total of 297 people were wounded in both cities. He was unable to provide a breakdown of how many of the dead were combatants and how many might have been civilians

caught in the fighting. He said Iraqi military casualties were not included.

At least 50 civilians and militants were killed during the military operations in Anbar during the past two weeks, according to an Associated Press count.

International observers have warned of shortages of food, fuel and other necessities, particularly in Fallujah. United Nations records show that more than 11,000 families have been uprooted by the fighting.

Iraqi security forces and allied Sunni tribesmen have been battling militants to recapture the cities, partially seized by fighters from an al-Qaida-linked group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

On Friday night, the U.N. Security Council issued a statement condemning the Ramadi

and Fallujah attacks and praised Iraqi security forces, local police and tribes in Anbar combating them.

Al-Qaida militants, emboldened by the civil war in neighboring Syria, have sought to position themselves as the champions of Sunnis against the Shiite-led government, though major Sunni tribes in Anbar and elsewhere oppose the group's extremist ideology and are fighting against it.

During a political gathering in Baghdad on Saturday, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki called for national unity among Iraqis in the war against al-Qaida, denying that there are sectarian motivations behind the military action in Anbar.

“It is your war, all of you (Iraqis) whether you like or not. ... It is not the war of a

specific group. It is the war of all sects, ethnic groups, religions and partners in this country. The fire will reach everybody,” al-Maliki said.

Saturday afternoon, police and hospital officials said one gunman was killed and three were wounded during sporadic clashes between Iraqi soldiers and militants in the eastern edge of Fallujah. Also, five people were wounded when a mortar shell landed on their house in Fallujah, officials said.

The violence continued elsewhere in the country as well. Gunmen killed two police officers manning a security checkpoint in the northern city of Mosul, police and hospital officials said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to talk to journalists.

Focus

Reversals in hard-won Iraqi city vex veterans

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Shirley Parrello knows that her youngest boy believed in his mission in Iraq. But as she watches Iraqi government forces try to retake the hard-won city of Fallujah from al-Qaida-linked fighters, she can't help wondering if it was worth Marine Lance Cpl. Brian Parrello's sacrifice.

"I'm starting to feel that his death was in vain," the West Milford, N.J., woman said of her 19-year-old son, who died in an explosion there on Jan. 1, 2005. "I'm hoping that I'm wrong. But things aren't looking good over there right now."

The 2004 image of two charred American bodies hanging from a bridge as a jubilant crowd pelted them with shoes seared the city's name into the American psyche. The brutal house-to-house battle to tame the Iraqi insurgent stronghold west of Baghdad cemented its place in U.S. military history.

But while many are disheartened at Fallujah's recent fall to Islamist forces, others try to place it in the context of Iraq's history of internal struggle since the ouster of dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003. And they don't see the reversal as permanent.

"I'm very disappointed right now, very frustrated," says retired Marine Col. Mike Shupp, who commanded the regimental combat team that secured the city in late 2004. "But this is part of this long war, and this is just another fight, another battle in this long struggle against terrorism and oppression."

Former scout sniper Earl J. Catagnus Jr. fought and bled in the taking of that ancient city on the banks of the Euphrates River. Now a military historian, Catagnus feels the battle has taken on an almost disproportionate importance in the American mind.

"If you watch 'NCIS' or anything that has a Marine ... they always say, 'Oh, I was in Fallujah,'" says the Purple Heart recipient, who left the military as a staff sergeant in 2006 and is now an assistant professor of history at Valley Forge Military Academy & College in Wayne, Pa. "For the new generation, it's because everybody keeps mentioning it. And that is the battle that really made a warrior a warrior. ...

"It's just for us as Americans, because we've elevated that battle to such high standards ... that it becomes turned into the 'lost cause,' the Vietnam War syndrome."



In this Jan. 26, 2008 file photo, U.S. Army Spc. Kris Hostetter, 21, from Nashville, Tenn., a medic with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment patrols in Arab Jabour during Operation Coliseum south of Baghdad, Iraq.

In the annals of the Marine Corps, the battle for Fallujah looms large.

The fighting there began in April 2004 after four security contractors from Blackwater USA were killed and the desecrated bodies of two were hung from a bridge. The so-called second battle of Fallujah—code-named Operation Phantom Fury—came seven months later.

For several bloody weeks, the Marines went house-to-house in what has been called some of the heaviest urban combat involving the Corps since the Battle of Hue City, Vietnam, in 1968. Historian Richard Lowry, who interviewed nearly 200 veterans of the Iraq battle, likens it to "a thousand SWAT teams going through the city, clearing criminals out."

"They entered darkened rooms, kicking down doors, never knowing if they would find an Iraqi family hunkered

down in fear or an Islamist terrorist waiting to shoot them and kill them," says Lowry, author of the book "New Dawn: The Battles for Fallujah."

About 100 Americans died and another 1,000 were wounded during the major fighting there, Lowry says, adding that it's difficult to overstate Fallujah's importance in the Iraq war.

"Up until that time, the nation was spiraling into anarchy, totally out of control," says Lowry, a Vietnam-era submarine veteran. "The United States Marine Corps—with help from the Army and from the Iraqis—went into Fallujah and cleared the entire city and brought security to Anbar Province, allowing the Iraqis to hold their first successful election."

And that is why the al-Qaida takeover is such a bitter disappointment for many.

Former Marine Lance Cpl. Garrett Anderson's unit lost 51 members in the city. When he considers whether the fighting was in vain, it turns his stomach.

"As a war fighter and Marine veteran of that battle, I feel that

since the war began knew was going to end this way."

On Tuesday, the site duffelblog.com posted a satirical column about two former Marines raising \$1,300 on Kickstarter to go back and retake the city in time for the battle's tenth anniversary.

"We paid for that city and we're keeping it!" one fictional commenter tells the site.

The piece had more than 30,000 Facebook likes by Wednesday.

Lowry says the U.S. "abandoned" the region's Sunnis, paving the way for a Shiite-led government that has "gotten into bed with the Iranians." He adds: "There is a polarization returning between the Shiites and the Sunnis ... and it's spreading."

Catagnus and others say the situation is more nuanced than that.

A sergeant with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines at the time, Catagnus was gearing up to go out when insurgents detonated the improvised bomb about 8 feet away. Despite a concussion and shrapnel wounds to his face, he never left the line.

While conceding that the battle helped change doctrine for urban warfare, he thinks Fallujah has become politicized—especially here at home.

"There's a lot of fiery language around it," he says. "I do not see this as the culmination of the failure of all of our efforts—yet."

Roman Baca, who served in Fallujah for about eight months as a sergeant in the Marine Corps Reserves, says it's hard for him to hear people question the military's work there. During his time, his machine gun platoon spent many of its days patrolling local villages, delivering school supplies to students and food and water.

The 39-year-old New York City man returned to Iraq last year to conduct a dance workshop. He's most worried about

what the outbreak of violence means for the Iraqis.

"You think of those kids in the villages that were so young who are now

either teenagers or in their 20s," he says. "What does it mean for them? What does it mean for the interpreters who were in danger then and are in danger again because they helped the Americans and their cause?"

For some veterans, the reversal of fortunes in Anbar, while unfortunate, is hardly surprising.

"I was always of the impression that Iraq was sort of doomed to fail no matter what

we did," says Derek Richardson of Redmond, Wash., a former Marine corporal who fought in the house-to-house action in late 2004. Now an investigator in Microsoft's legal department, he adds, "For me, it was more about winning individual battles" and keeping his comrades safe.

David R. Franco survived a roadside bomb blast outside Fallujah in 2005. The retired Marine suffers from back pain, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other ailments that send him to doctors and psychologists regularly.

"To me, it was just a matter of time for it to happen again and for al-Qaida to go back in there," said the 53-year-old veteran of Moorpark, Calif., who retired as a sergeant major. "It'll be a constant thing." Still, Franco—whose son was also wounded in Iraq—says it was worth it.

So does Nick Popaditch.

On April 7, 2004, Popaditch's tank was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade as he rolled through the city. Shrapnel tore through his sinuses and destroyed his right eye—now strikingly replaced by a prosthetic bearing the Marine Corps logo.

The gunnery sergeant's actions earned him a Silver Star and Purple Heart, but cost him his career. The San Diego-area man is studying to be a high school math teacher, and he refuses to second-guess the recent events in Iraq.

"There's a lot of downtrodden people there who got a shot at a free life, at freedom," says Popaditch, 46, who ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 2012. "And if the bad guys come back into control, that's not something I can control 8,000 miles away here. I'm just proud of the fact that when it came time to stand and fight for those things, those concepts of freedom, liberty, human rights ... I'm glad my nation did it."

For his part, Shupp, the former colonel, is convinced that many of those holding sway in Fallujah aren't al-Qaida, but simply "armed thugs." Even before the U.S.-led invasion, many Iraqis considered the city a "crossroads of criminal activity," and his troops were never meant to be "an army of occupation."

"It's one of the lifetime struggles of good versus bad," says Shupp, who now works as a defense lobbyist in Washington, D.C. "And this is the time for Iraq to come forward. We gave them all the tools. We gave them the ability to fight these guys."

"I was always of the impression that Iraq was sort of doomed to fail no matter what we did."

Health & Fitness

FDA approves diabetes drug with new approach

By **MATTHEW PERRONE**
AP HEALTH WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Food and Drug Administration on Wednesday approved a new

diabetes drug from Bristol-Myers Squibb and AstraZeneca that uses a novel approach to reduce

blood sugar.

Farxiga is a once-a-day tablet designed to help diabetes patients eliminate excess sugar via their urine. That differs from older drugs that decrease the amount of sugar absorbed from food and stored in the liver.

The drug is the second product approved in the U.S. from the new class of medicines known as SGLT2 drugs. In March the FDA approved Johnson & Johnson's Invokana, which also works by eliminating excess sugar through patients' urine.

The agency cleared Farxiga tablets for patients with type 2 diabetes, which affects about 24 million people in the U.S. The approval marks a comeback for the drug, which was previously rejected last year

after studies raised concerns about links to bladder cancer and liver toxicity.

Ten cases of bladder cancer were found in patients taking the drug in clinical trials, so Farxiga's label warns against using it in patients with the disease. A panel of FDA advisers last month said that the uptick in cancers was likely a statistical fluke, and not related to the drug. But the FDA is requiring Bristol and AstraZeneca to track rates of bladder cancer in patients enrolled in a long-term follow up study.

The companies will also monitor rates of heart disease, a frequent safety issue with newer diabetes medications.

The most common side effects associated with Farxiga included fungal and urinary

tract infections. The drug can be used as a stand-alone drug or in combination with other common diabetes treatments, such as insulin and metformin.

People with type 2 diabetes are unable to properly break down carbohydrates, either because their bodies do not produce enough insulin or have become resistant to the hormone, which controls blood sugar levels. Diabetics often require multiple drugs with different mechanisms of action to control their blood sugar levels.

New York-based Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. and London-based AstraZeneca PLC already co-market the diabetes drug Onglyza, which increases insulin production while reducing glucose production.

CDC: Lung cancer rates drop, especially among men

Health officials are reporting a drop in the rate of new lung cancer cases.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says lung cancer incidence rates declined nearly 3 percent per year among men and about 1 percent per year among women from 2005 to

2009.

The biggest decline was in the 35-to-44-year-old age group, where rates fell about 6 percent per year for both sexes combined.

Officials credited tobacco control efforts. Smoking rates have been steadily declining for years, and the

most recent figures suggest that about 18 percent of adults smoke.

Lung cancer remains the top cancer killer in the U.S. and worldwide. This week marks the 50th anniversary of the first Surgeon General's report tying cigarette smoking to lung cancer. (AP)

Is it a cold or something more? Lab researchers seek snappy answers

By **JEREMY THOMAS**
SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

LIVERMORE, Calif.—Your head aches, you're congested and simply getting out of bed is a chore. You pay a visit to your doctor, and within minutes—using a simple cheek swab placed in a tiny box—he knows precisely which virus or bacteria is causing the symptoms and prescribes the right treatment.

While this scene would be right at home in the "Star Trek" sick bay, it may become a staple in real-world clinics within the decade, according to Lawrence Livermore Laboratory chemical engineer Elizabeth Wheeler.

Wheeler's team of engineers, biologists and chemists, headed by principal investigator Reginald Beer, is developing a method to recognize disease-causing pathogens quicker than ever before. The key: obtaining the bacteria or virus DNA and rapidly copying it so there's enough to identify what's causing your illness.

"It's basically like you're Xeroxing it," Wheeler said. "Once you've got enough of it, you can detect it."

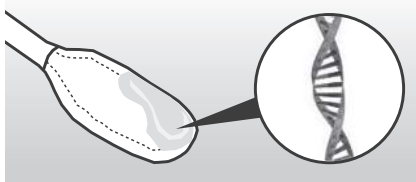
The technique—polymerase chain reaction (PCR)—isn't a recent phenomenon. Discovered in 1983 by Nobel Prize winner and University of California, Berkeley, alum Kary Mullis, it's been used for identifying human remains, food safety, and bacterial detection.

Just as you learned in science class, DNA has two strands. Using PCR, a special enzyme is added and the DNA is heated up to 94 degrees Celsius (202 degrees Fahrenheit). The strands break apart and the enzyme "fills in" the opposite strand. By alternately heating and cooling the sample in a device the size of two toasters stacked on top of each other, the technique doubles the amount of genetic material with each cycle. It takes about three minutes to run the

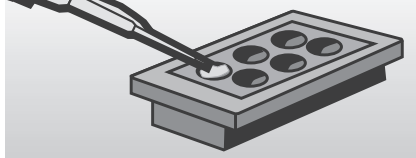
A faster diagnosis

In the near future, your doctor will know what bug is making you sick within minutes, thanks to the Fast PCR (polymerase chain reaction) machine.

1 The cheek of a patient is swabbed to collect the DNA of the virus or bacteria causing a sickness; enough copies of the DNA are made to determine the DNA's identity



2 The DNA is prepared with enzymes and placed in a Fast PCR machine



30 cycles needed to amplify the DNA to a size where it can be identified.

Wheeler, whose husband is a San Ramon physician, said the project's goal is to have Fast PCR devices in every clinician's office, allowing patients to submit a sample and have it processed while the doctor goes through his check-up routine. Before the exam is over—in about the time it takes to cook a bag of microwave popcorn—the physician could make a decision on appropriate treatment.

"Everyone's been frustrated when you go in and it's like, 'is it a virus or a bacteria?'" Wheeler said. "You could run this and they can say, 'Yep, you have a bacterial infection, here's the antibiotic,' or 'it's a virus, go home and rest.'"

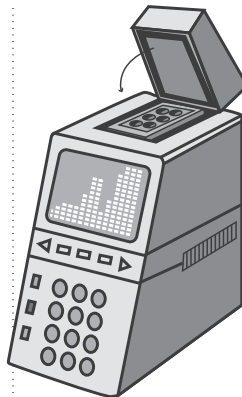
Dr. Stephen Bustin, a British scientist and former professor of molecular sciences, literally wrote the book on the PCR technique. While reactions once took hours, Bustin said via email, they're now routinely

done in tens of minutes.

The amplification now takes only three minutes but other preparations make the whole process longer. Within a year or two, he adds, getting results in less than 10 minutes will become commonplace.

"This opens up all kinds of diagnostic possibilities," Bustin wrote, including "carrying out PCR evaluations of a patient's sample whilst talking to the doctor."

Working on Fast PCR since 2010, Beer's team was responsible for speeding up the amplification part to less than three minutes. In that technique, cold water is passed over a porous copper platform holding the microscopic samples, rapidly dropping the temperature to 55 degrees Celsius (131 degrees Fahrenheit). The platform is heated back up, the cycle repeats 30 times, and the results are matched to a known genetic signature. As speedy as the procedure is now, Wheeler thinks the team can go even faster.



3 What once took hours will take a few minutes; the Fast PCR machine makes exact copies of the DNA and analyzes them, identifying the virus or bacteria for the doctor

Source: Lawrence Livermore Labs
Graphic: Bay Area News Group
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CDC: US is 'in the thick' of flu season, cases up

ATLANTA (AP)—Flu season is ramping up, with illness widespread in at least 35 states. That's up from 25 in the previous week.

A flu expert with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the agency's

weekly report released Friday shows "We're in the thick of flu season."

ON THE NET

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

The CDC's Lyn Finelli says the season likely hasn't peaked, but that it's too soon to know if it will be worse than normal.

The numbers aren't as high so far as last year, when flu season started early. Flu usually peaks in January or February.

The number of people seeking medical care for the flu climbed to more than 4 percent of all doctor visits last week, a near doubling from two weeks earlier.

Personal Trainer

Best exercises for abs

In a scientific study comparing 13 exercises for the "six-pack" abdominal muscle, rectus abdominus, these were the most effective.

Bicycle maneuver

Lie on back; lift knees to 45-degree angle; make pedaling motion, touching each knee with opposite elbow

© 2014 MCT

Captain's chair

Done on common piece of gym equipment; slowly lift and lower knees together, maintaining good control

Crunch on exercise ball

Sit with feet flat; slowly roll until ball is under lower back, thighs and trunk are horizontal; raise upper body to 45 degree angle or less, then lower

Source: Helen Lee McComas, Paul Trap
Graphic: American Council on Exercise, San Diego State University Biomechanics Lab

Life & Style

Diane Von Furstenberg celebrates wrap dress' 40th



A general view of atmosphere is seen at the DVF Journey of a Dress 40th Anniversary Party at Wilshire May Company Building on Jan. 10, 2014 in Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Diane Von Furstenberg thought that, after 40 years, her wrap dress deserved a party. The 67-year-old designer and dozens of her famous friends celebrated the opening Friday of “Journey of a Dress,” an exhibit honoring the timeless style she introduced in the early 1970s: A flattering, easy-to-wear dress that fastens with a simple tie at the waist.

“This is the first time that I ever honored the wrap dress, and she did so much for me,” said an ebullient Von Furstenberg, wearing a black wrap dress with floor-skimming yellow kimono sleeves. “She made me famous. She paid for all my bills. And tonight we celebrate the wrap dress.”

Marisa Tomei, Demi Moore, Tobey Maguire, Molly Sims, Edward Norton, Robin Wright and Rachel Zoe were among the many stars celebrating Von Furstenberg’s enduring design in a vacant department store.

“It’s a total standard in a woman’s closet,” said stylist Estee Stanley, who counts Jessica Biel and Lea Michele among her clients. “It’s just so

easy: You throw it on, it’s not uncomfortable, and it’s sexy.”

The exhibit at the Wilshire May Company Building, on view until April 1, features the designer’s favorite dresses from throughout the decades. Scores of mannequins stand in neat rows, their narrow waists all belted, each in different versions of the wrap dress.

Von Furstenberg is also known for patterns and color palettes, which splash across the exhibit space and serve as themes for the collections. A group of mannequins dressed in blues, browns and oranges stand atop a blue snakeskin-patterned floor, beside yellow geometric walls.

Part of “Journey of a Dress” is dedicated to the designer herself: Paintings and portraits of Von Furstenberg by artists including Andy Warhol and Annie Leibovitz fill one room of the exhibit. The hallway is lined with oversized reproductions of the DVF wrap dress in the pages of 1970s Vogue magazine and on models and movie stars then and now. Rene Russo, Jerry Hall and Iman wore them in the ‘70s, as did Cybill Shepherd in “Taxi Driver” in 1976. Michelle Obama and Madonna wore them recently. So did Amy Adams in “American Hustle.”

All-star cast takes on AIDS TV drama

PASADENA, California (AP)—Producer Ryan Murphy said it was “sort of thrilling” to feature openly gay leading men Matt Bomer and Jim Parsons in an AIDS TV drama.

Murphy said social attitudes toward gays have changed a great deal even in the five years he’s been working on the project, “The Normal Heart.” But he didn’t seek out any actors for the drama based on their sexuality, only on their skill, said the producer of “Glee” and “American Horror Story.”

Bomer stars in USA’s crime caper “White Collar” series, and Parsons is the Emmy Award-winning star of “The

Big Bang Theory.”

The HBO film, adapted from Larry Kramer’s 1985 play about the early years of the AIDS crisis, also stars Mark Ruffalo, Julia Roberts and Taylor Kitsch.

In a Q&A session Thursday with the Television Critics Association, Roberts wryly brushed a question about her “very unglamorous” role as a paraplegic doctor researching the AIDS virus.

Said the “Pretty Woman” star: “It’s funny when a girl just looks like a person, you’re unglamorous,” adding, “I’m just saying.”

“The Normal Heart” debuts this spring on HBO.

Cee Lo Green: I want to create a ‘Voice’ star

PASADENA, California (AP)—“The Voice” is a ratings success for NBC, but judge Cee Lo Green says it has one more mountain to climb.

Green said Friday that “The Voice” has yet to mint a new music star from its contestants, and he’d like to be a part of changing that.

As a contrast, Fox’s “American Idol” has developed stars

like Kelly Clarkson and Carrie Underwood.

Green has alternated with Usher as a judge on “The Voice.” He says he’d like to continue but he has other ambitions that might someday pull him away.

Green is starring in a TBS comedy series with his colleagues in the rap group Goodie Mob that is due to air later this year.



Green

Amanda Bynes’ bong-toss case in NY to be dismissed

NEW YORK (AP)—The bong-tossing case against Amanda Bynes will be dismissed if the actress stays out of trouble for six months and goes to counseling twice a week, a judge ruled Friday.

Bynes was charged in New York City last year with reckless endangerment and marijuana possession after building managers called police because they said she was smoking pot in the lobby of her Manhattan apartment. When officers entered her apartment, they said they saw her throw a bong out the window.

The 27-year-old “Hair-spray” star later appeared in

court in a disheveled blond wig and said she didn’t do anything wrong.

It was one episode in a string of erratic incidents last year. Bynes was institutionalized in August after authorities said she set a small fire in the driveway of a home in California. Her mother, Lynn Bynes, was granted a temporary conservatorship over the actress, but the case was dismissed because Amanda Bynes’ care was being overseen by a mental health court.

The actress does not have to admit guilt in the bong case. She must attend counseling twice a week for six

months and cannot be re-arrested, or the deal is revoked.

Bynes didn’t appear in court. An affidavit filed on her behalf by attorney Gerald Shargel said she understood the agreement.

“This is an important step in her rehabilitation, and she is pleased with the result,” he said outside court.

The actress left an inpatient mental health treatment facility in California in December and is currently with her parents. Her California attorney said she is considering returning to school to study fashion design.

In the late 1990s and early

2000s, Bynes was one of the hottest actors on children’s TV.

Beginning in 2000, she won four consecutive Kids’ Choice Awards for best television actress, the first for her role in the ensemble kids comedy-variety show “All That,” and the others for her own variety program, “The Amanda Show.” She went on to star in the TV series “What I Like About You” and appeared in several films including “Big Fat Liar,” “What A Girl Wants” and “She’s the Man.”

Bynes also starred in several TV movies before her career began to decline.

Hawaii man sues Warner Bros. over ‘Matrix’ movies

WAILUKU, Hawaii (AP)—A Hawaii man has filed a \$300 million copyright infringement lawsuit, claiming the “Matrix” trilogy of science fiction films has striking similarities to his screenplay.

Playwright Thomas Althouse of Maui claims 166 instances in the movies are similar to parts of his 1992 screenplay, “The Immortals.”

“They took so much,” he told the *Maui News*. “The striking similarities are off the charts.”

Named in the lawsuit are Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc., producer Joel Silver, directors and writers.

The lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in the Cen-

tral District of California in January 2013.

Althouse said he was invited by studio executives to submit his story to the Burbank, California, studio in 1993 for consideration as a possible project. Defense attorneys, in court filings, deny such an invitation was made.

“There is no merit to this frivolous lawsuit,” Warner Bros. said in a statement.

Althouse claims the concept of the movie trilogy—futuristic tales in which reality is actually simulated, created by machines to subdue humans, and a computer programmer leads a rebellion against the machines—was born four

months after the studio received his screenplay.

The first film, “The Matrix,” was released in 1999. It was followed by “The Matrix Reloaded” and “The Matrix Revolutions,” both released in 2003.

Because the lawsuit was filed more than 10 years after the first film’s release, the statute of limitations has passed. Althouse’s lawsuit is for claims against the two remaining movies.

He said it took him 20 years to file a lawsuit because he was diagnosed with a stress disorder that prevented him from watching violent movies. He also said he heard the two other films were horrible and didn’t bother to watch them.

Chili Peppers to join Bruno Mars at Super Bowl

NEW YORK (AP)—Bruno Mars will have help from the Red Hot Chili Peppers when he performs at the Super Bowl next month.

Mars announced Saturday that the Rock and Roll Hall of Famers will join him as part of his halftime show at the National Football League championship game.

Super Bowl halftime performers often have collaborators. Last year, Beyonce had Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams from her Destiny's Child days join her onstage, and



In this Aug. 25, 2013 file photo, Bruno Mars poses backstage with the award for Best Male Video for "Locked Out of Heaven" at the MTV Video Music Awards at the Barclays Center in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

AP

two years ago Nicki Minaj and M.I.A. joined Madonna for her halftime show.

Mars was named Billboard's 2013 artist of the year. His hits include the No. 1 song "When I Was Your Man," and his Grammy-nominated sophomore album, "Unorthodox Jukebox," has sold almost 2 million copies.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Actor Stephen Baldwin makes payment on tax bill

NEW CITY, New York (AP)—An attorney for actor Stephen Baldwin says the "The Usual Suspects" star has made another \$100,000 installment payment on his unpaid New York taxes. Attorney Russell Yankwitt says Friday's payment brings his total paid to \$300,000. He's got \$100,000 more to go. Baldwin admitted last March that he failed to pay state taxes for 2008, 2009 and 2010. The total bill in taxes, interest and penalties was \$400,000, but Baldwin paid \$100,000 before entering his guilty plea. Yankwitt says he paid the same amount in October. Under a deal with prosecutors, Baldwin's record will be wiped clean if he pays the full amount by April 11. If not, he faces five years of probation. The 47-year-old Baldwin lives in Upper Grandview. His brothers Alec, William and Daniel are also actors.

White House says gov't can't force Kimmel off air

WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House has responded to a petition calling for an apology and the removal of Jimmy Kimmel's television show by saying the comedian can't be forced off the air. More than 105,000 people signed the petition on the White House website. It followed an October broadcast of ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live" featuring a segment in which Kimmel spoke to young children about U.S. government debt owed to China. One boy said "kill everyone in China" when Kimmel asked how the U.S. should repay the Asian power. In its response, the White House noted that ABC and Kimmel have apologized, and that the television network has removed the segment from future broadcasts and its online platforms. The White House also noted that the Constitution protects free speech, even when it's offensive.

Steven Bochco on slowing down: 'I'm just old'

PASADENA, California

(AP)—Veteran television producer Steven Bochco has a three-word explanation for why he's slowing down: "I'm just old." The groundbreaking creative mind behind "NYPD Blue," "L.A. Law" and "Hill Street Blues" said Friday that he doesn't have the creative drive he used to have. The 70-year-old hasn't retired, though. Bochco is producing "Murder in the First" for the TNT network this summer. The drama stars Taye Diggs as a San Francisco homicide detective who teams with Kathleen Robinson to solve a single crime over the course of a season. "I remember when I used to be the youngest guy in the room," Bochco said at a news conference with journalists who cover television. "Now I'm the oldest guy in the room. As things change, you change with it. I'm totally comfortable with what I'm doing at this stage in my life." Bochco said he takes pride in having helped television dramas move into a new creative era in the 1980s through "Hill Street Blues," to the point where many critics consider the present day the golden age of television drama.

David Cassidy arrested in LA on suspicion of DUI

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Seventies heartthrob David Cassidy has been arrested in Southern California on suspicion of drunken driving. The California Highway Patrol says the 63-year-old Cassidy was pulled over Friday near Los Angeles International Airport after an officer spotted him making an illegal right turn against a red light. He was arrested after the officer smelled alcohol in the rental car. Cassidy was released Saturday morning on \$15,000 bail and is scheduled to appear in court Feb. 5. Last year Cassidy was pulled over in New York on suspicion of driving drunk. He also has a 2011 DUI conviction in Florida. Cassidy appeared in TV's "The Partridge Family" from 1970 to '74 and was a recording star and teen idol. A call seeking comment from Cassidy's publicist was not immediately returned.

Rep: Whitney Houston's daughter gets married



AP

This Oct. 12, 2012 file photo shows Nick Gordon and Bobbi Kristina Brown attending the premiere party for "The Houstons On Our Own" at the Tribeca Grand hotel in New York.

ATLANTA (AP)—Whitney Houston's daughter, Bobbi Kristina Brown, has tied the knot with her friend Nick Gordon.

A representative for the family confirmed Friday that the 20-year-old Brown married Gordon. But the rep did not know where or when the marriage took place.

Brown tweeted about her marriage Thursday, posting a photo of the couple wearing wedding rings with hands on

top of each other. She wrote in the caption, "#HappilyMarried. So #InLove. If you didn't get it the first time that is."

In 2012, Brown caused a stir when she was spotted wearing a sparkly bauble on her ring finger. But it turned out she was wearing her mother's ring and was not engaged.

Brown's father is Bobby Brown.

The late Houston left her entire estate to her daughter.

Amy Poehler: 'SNL' hiring Sasheer Zamata 'awesome'

PASADENA, California (AP)—"Saturday Night Live" alumna Amy Poehler says her old show's hire of young comic Sasheer Zamata is awesome.

Zamata and two new writers were hired at NBC's longtime comedy show last week. All are black, with the show responding to criticism that it needed more diversity in its creative staff.



Poehler

Poehler takes particular pride. She's a co-founder of New York's Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre, and says that Zamata was brought in as part of that improv group's own effort to promote diversity.

Poehler is preparing for Sunday's job co-hosting the Golden Globes with Tina Fey, which she said she's anticipating with a mixture of excitement and nervousness.

Reformed bully still regrets the pain she caused others

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: You said in your Nov. 14 column on bullying that you hadn't received a single letter from anyone who had bullied others. Well, I was a bully.

As a young girl I'd tease and taunt, and when I was older I used sarcasm as a way to bully. I was involved in an abusive relationship in my 20s. With support and counseling, I was able to stop being abused and being abusive.

I learned the feelings I had repressed—shame, fear and low self-worth from a childhood of sexual and physical abuse—were misdirected at the people around me instead of at my abuser, my father, as they should have been. I'm not saying this is an excuse for the hurt I inflicted on others, but for me there was a correlation.

I'm now in a loving and supportive relationship. We have raised our children to be kind, thoughtful and confident individuals. I'm involved with an organization supporting nonprofit programs in our community that empower abused children, reach out to the sexually exploited and help women experiencing domestic violence.

Because of the life I lead now, I have been able to let go of the negativity and shame of being abused, but the shame of being abusive stays with me. I hope the people I hurt have forgiven me and have been able to move forward. But I will never know for sure.

Thank you for allowing me to share my story. Even if it doesn't get printed, writing it has lifted a little bit of the weight that I still carry from my bullying days.

REDEEMING MYSELF OUT WEST

DEAR REDEEMING: Confession is good for the soul, and if getting this off your chest has been helpful, I'm glad. Obviously, you have grown since the days when you were an abuser, and your focus on helping vulnerable people in your community is laudable. I hope you will continue the work that you're doing because there is great need for it.

If your letter makes just one person stop and think twice about WHY he or she would deliberately hurt or diminish someone else, it will have been worth the space in my column because sometimes those scars can last a lifetime.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I recently lost a niece. She had struggled with substance abuse and was away at college when she died. I believed in what a wonderful person she was and could be, and often sent her cards of encouragement.

When my sister and her husband went to retrieve her belongings, they mentioned that she had my cards around her room. I had hoped that her parents would give them to me, but three months later, they have not. Would it be wrong for me to ask for them?

LOVING AUNT IN THE SOUTH

DEAR LOVING AUNT: Please accept my sympathy for your family's loss. The cards may not have been offered because your sister and her husband are experiencing the depths of grief. While it would not be "wrong" to ask if you can have them, don't be surprised if they refuse to let them go—at least for the time being. Having the possessions their daughter surrounded herself with may be important to them right now as a way of feeling closer to her.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■■■

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



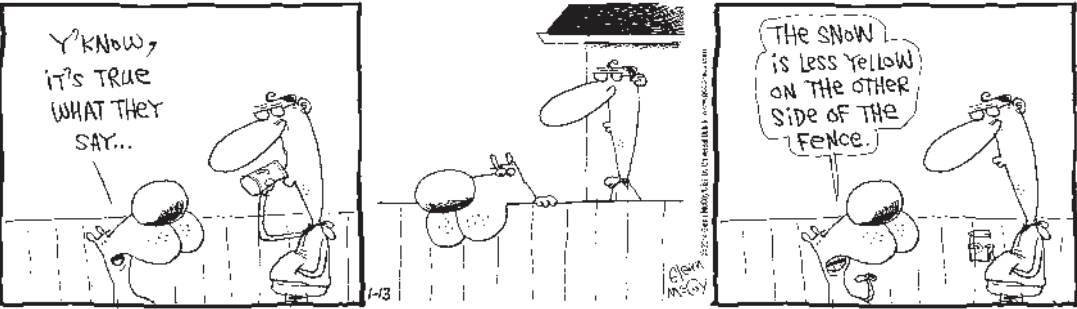
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 En-grossed

5 Perform

8 Spill the beans

12 Cameo's inverse

14 Ethereal

15 Place for cocktails and music

16 Leave out

17 Greek consonants

18 Lowly mob

20 Put back to zero

23 Vittorio de —

24 Eastern potentate

25 Conference that excludes the jury

28 Wire measure

29 Sand formations

30 Third deg.?

32 Icon lineup

DOWN

1 Tear

2 Black phenome-non, for short

3 Sch. org.

4 Surname on "ALF" or "Full House"

5 Priestly vestments

6 Spy grp.

7 More scorching

8 Monkey bread tree

9 Owl's perch

10 Seed coat

11 Informa-tion measure

13 Big toe woe

19 Experts

20 Sleep

21 Send forth

22 Missile shelter

23 Mid-eastern peninsula

25 Topics

26 Church section

27 Actress Perlman

29 XXIII times

31 Water barrier

33 Balance

34 Diamond pattern

36 Fellow number

37 Whatever accessory

38 Basin

39 Allows

40 From the beginning

43 Exist

44 Huge

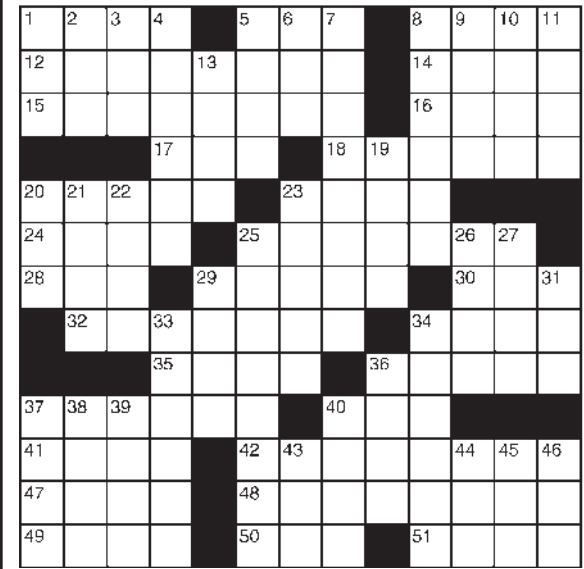
45 Alias abbr.

46 Crimson

Solution time: 27 mins.

S	I	C	I	A	T	E	B	A	N	K
E	R	A	A	L	T	O	R	E	O	
C	A	L	A	B	A	S	H	L	E	A
A	X	I	S	P	E	A	R	S		
O	R	B	I	T	W	I	L	I		
F	U	R	L	B	A	L	A	N	C	E
F	B	I	F	U	L	L	A	D	O	
S	E	A	M	I	L	E	S	P	L	E
I	N	K	S	F	L	A	N	K		
S	P	E	C	K	G	L	U	M		
P	U	R	R	C	A	L	A	M	I	T
A	R	G	O	N	E	S				
N	E	O	N	Y	A	N	K	E	A	I

Friday's answer 1-13



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Liam Hemsworth, 24; Orlando Bloom, 37; Patrick Dempsey, 48; Julia Louis-Dreyfus, 53.

Happy Birthday: Take a central position and work your magic from that point. Don't rely on others to do things for you. Knowing how to pace your time in order to reach your goals will be crucial and must not be interfered with, regardless of the demands others put on you. Don't let anger slow you down; focus and succeed. Your numbers are 4, 10, 16, 21, 23, 35, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Fight for what you want. Turn your ideas into reality, even if someone criticizes your choices. Engage in what interests you the most. As long as you don't make a big deal out of things, you'll reach your goals. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Keep moving forward even if changes are going on all around you. Focus on where you want to go and what you want to achieve. Don't look back when you should be looking forward. Romance is in the stars. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Choose communication and explanation over pushy, aggressive behavior. You will achieve far more if you can spell out exactly what you want and what you expect. Your vision will lead to positive action. Don't hem and haw when decisiveness is required. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A personal makeover will help you start the year out on the right foot. Consider the changes that will make you happy and confident. What you do to build your confidence and gain respect

will also improve your relationships. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Add a little excitement to the mix and you will capture the attention of someone who has something to contribute. Don't let domestic responsibilities hold you back when you should be interacting with peers and colleagues who can help you advance. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Get in step and don't miss a beat. Your timing must be impeccable if you want to reach your destination. Your ability to be entertaining and productive will help you establish your position amongst your peers. Love is on the rise. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't back down if something needs to be said. Voice your opinion and make whatever adjustments are necessary to get past any setback or inconvenience you face. Emotional upset and anger must not be allowed to interfere with your plans. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You can offer help, but don't let anyone take advantage of your generosity. Protect what you have worked hard to achieve and be ready to counter any information that may affect your reputation. Stand tall, be strong and show who is boss. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Put work first and don't let anyone cause a disruption that can stand between you and completing a task that's expected of you. A business partnership or job offer appears to be a blessing in disguise. Look at all the angles before you accept. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Choose the most responsible route you can take and follow through, regardless of the controversy you face. It's important to stand behind your beliefs and your traditions. Protect your assets, your emotions and your physical well-being. Avoid excessive behavior. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Travel or dealing with financial matters, authority figures or institutions will pose a problem. Concentrate on your talent and what you have to offer socially and professionally, and you will find a way to make improvements to your everyday routine. ****

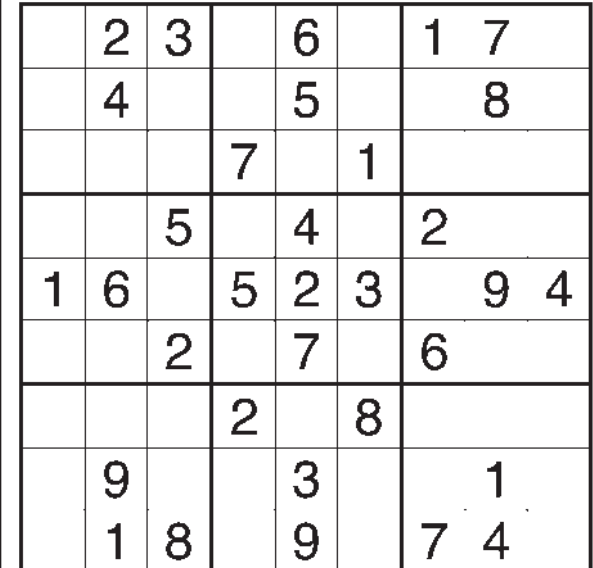
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Look at any situation that isn't stable. Emotional matters at home, as well as with peers and outsiders, can disrupt your long-term plans. Prepare to secure your position and massage any situation that has the potential to backfire. **

Birthday Baby: You are productive, goal-oriented and determined. You are responsible and innovative.

Eugenia's website—eugenialast.com, Eugenia's android app @ <http://bit.ly/exhoro> and join Eugenia on [twitter/facebook/linkedin](https://twitter.com/eugenialast).

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

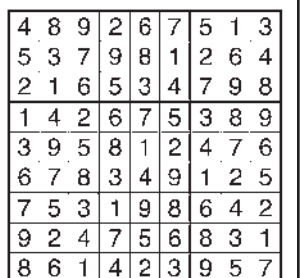


Difficulty Level ★ 1/13

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level **** 1/13

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

DECORATING A NURSERY Solution: 7 letters



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Animals, Armoire, Basket, Bears, Bins, Books, Boys, Carpet, Cars, Cases, Color, Contemporary, Crib, Decals, Diaper Stackers, Dolls, Door, Dresser, Girls, Glider, Hangers, Hooks, Knobs, Lights, Linen, Mattress, Mementos, Mirror, Mobile, Modern, Mural, Pirates, Princess, Rocker, Rocking Chair, Rugs, Safe, Sports, Stars, Themes, Time, Toys, Trend, Wallpaper
Last Friday's Answer: Weather
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Blount has 4 TD runs, Patriots top Colts, 43-22

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—LeGarrette Blount wasn't satisfied with three short touchdown runs, not against a team coming off the second greatest comeback in playoff history.

So the 250-pound back who makes long runs routine took off on a 73-yarder and carried the New England Patriots to their third straight AFC championship game with a 43-22 victory over the Indianapolis Colts on Saturday night.

Suddenly, the ground game has replaced Tom Brady as the heart of the Patriots' offense.

"Once I get into the open field, they're going to have to chase me," Blount said. "And if they catch me, they do. And if they don't, they don't. They usually don't."

They didn't two weeks earlier when he scored on runs of 36 and 35 yards in the regular-season finale against Buffalo. He also returned kickoffs 83 and 62 yards in that 34-20 victory that gave New England a first-round bye. And they didn't on his long touchdown that gave the Patriots (13-4) a 36-22 lead early in the fourth quarter against the Colts (12-6).

The Patriots will face the winner of the game Sunday between the Broncos and Chargers. It will be in Denver if the Broncos win, and New England will host it if the Chargers win.

"It's just a great achievement," Brady said. "People have counted us out at times this year, but I think we've got a locker room full of believers."

Blount tied Curtis Martin's team playoff record of 166 yards rushing, on 24 carries, two weeks after rushing for a career-high 189.

"He's got that combination of size, power and quickness and speed," Patriots coach Bill Belichick said. "He can run hard. He can make guys miss and he can go the distance."

Blount scored on three 2-yard runs in the first half, then burst through the right side for his 73-yarder. Once he reached the end zone, he placed the ball gently on the ground made soggy by a game-long rain.

On the next series, Luck threw his third interception and the Patriots capitalized with Stevan Ridley's second touchdown run, a 1-yarder that finished the scoring with 11:12 left.

"I'm just disappointed in myself," Luck said. "I can't commit that many turnovers and have a chance to win against a great team like this."

Blount joined Ricky Waters, who had five touchdowns for San Francisco on Jan. 15, 1994, as the only players with four or more in a playoff game. The Patriots six rushing touchdowns tied the 49ers' total in that game for second most in playoff history.

Blount's performance came

two weeks after he ran for 189 yards and returned two kickoffs for 145 in a 34-20 victory over Buffalo in the regular-season finale.

Billed as a matchup between quarterbacks—long-time great Brady and second-year star Luck—the Patriots' leader was content to hand off while Luck threw an interception on his second pass and never found consistency. He threw two touchdown passes to LaVon Brazill but also threw four interceptions.

Luck had three interceptions a week earlier but led the Colts from a 38-10 deficit early in the third quarter to a 45-44 win over the Kansas City Chiefs in a wild-card game.

"We had our chances, man, to make plays and get our offense back on the field," Colts safety Antoine Bethea said. "Last game, we were able to do that, but it was a great quarterback, a great offense and a great team we were facing (Saturday)."

The Colts trailed 21-12 at half-time, then cut the deficit to 29-22 on a 35-yard pass to Brazill with 5:01 left in the third. The Patriots dominated the rest of the way.

"We just had to keep our foot on the gas pedal," Blount said, "and make sure that they didn't to us what they did to Kansas City."

Blount's first touchdown came on New England's first offensive play after Alfonzo Dennard's interception. He scored again on the Patriots' second series.

Luck responded with a 38-yard touchdown pass to Brazill. Former Patriot Adam Vinatieri set an NFL record with his 59th post-season extra point, making it 14-7.

Blount's third touchdown came 4:06 into in the second quarter before Vinatieri's 36-yard field goal made it 21-10.

The Colts got a break late in the first half when Danny Aiken's snap sailed over punter Ryan Allen's head, ending up in a safety. The Patriots also got a break that the Colts didn't get a touchdown out of it after Allen failed to concede the safety.

Allen fumbled into the air and Indianapolis' Jeris Pendleton slapped the ball out of the end zone.

"Ryan probably wasn't sure how close they were to him," Belichick said.

Allen hurt his shoulder on the play and placekicker Stephen Gostkowski punted the rest of the game. Brady took over Allen's holding duties.

Indianapolis got the ball on the free kick, but the drive ended with Luck's second interception.

Vinatieri's 21-yard field goal early in the third quarter made it 21-15.

Then the Patriots took a 29-15 lead on Ridley's 3-yard run and his carry for a 2-point conversion.



New England Patriots running back LeGarrette Blount (29) heads downfield for a touchdown during the second half of an AFC divisional NFL playoff football game against the Indianapolis Colts in Foxborough, Mass., Saturday, Jan. 11, 2014.

But Luck came right back with his second touchdown pass to Brazill.

"We didn't accomplish the ultimate goal," Colts running back Donald Brown said, "but there are definitely some positives to look back on."

Brady completed 13 of 25 passes for 198 yards with no touchdowns or interceptions. Luck was 20 for 41 for 331 yards.

Seahawks 23, Saints 15

In Seattle, when he got around the edge, there was no one for Marshawn Lynch to hit. Directly ahead was open field, the end zone and the Seattle Seahawks' place in the NFC championship game.

Once again, Lynch overpowered the New Orleans Saints in the postseason.

"That was maybe 'Beast Mode II.' I don't know but it was a very cool way to end that game and give us the score that we needed," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said.

Lynch carried 28 times for 140 yards and two touchdowns and Seattle's defense flustered Drew Brees and New Orleans in a 23-15 victory Saturday in the NFC

divisional playoff game.

"You just don't know how many more opportunities you're going to have," Brees said. "That's what makes it so tough standing up here and talking about it."

Steven Hauschka added three field goals in blustery conditions and the top-seeded Seahawks advanced to the NFC title game for the second time. They will host San Francisco or Carolina next Sunday after last reaching the conference title game in the 2005 playoffs.

Seattle shut out the Saints in the first half, got Lynch's first 100-yard game since Week 10 of the regular season and received a spark from the brief return of Percy Harvin before he left with a concussion. Lynch scored on a 15-yard run in the first half and capped the victory with a 31-yard scoring run with 2:40 left that Carroll celebrated by jumping into offensive line coach Tom Cable's arms.

"I don't run to get tackled," Lynch said.

While the clinching score lacked the stunning explosiveness of Lynch's "Beast Quake" touchdown run against the Saints in the 2010 playoffs, this one was

more important. It ensured Seattle would not be the latest No. 1 seed to get upset by a No. 6 seed in the divisional round.

Lynch's clinching TD was a similar to that 2010 play. Lynch read the blocking perfectly and cut to the outside using two blocks from tight end Zach Miller and Jermaine Kearse. Lynch's only contact was a stiff-arm of Keenan Lewis that allowed him free passage to the end zone and left CenturyLink Field swaying.

"It's all want with him," Seattle wide receiver Golden Tate said. "He's blessed with tremendous athleticism and body control and power. But right there he wanted that. He just wanted it and he went and got it."

Lynch set a franchise playoff record for yards rushing. His running made up for another shaky day passing by Russell Wilson. Seattle's offense was a concern heading into the postseason and, outside of Lynch, did little to quell those worries.

Wilson missed on five of his first six pass attempts to start the second half but came through with a 31-yard completion to Doug Baldwin with 2:57 remaining. The Saints blitzed and Wilson and Baldwin connected.

Lynch scored on the next play.

"At the end of the game I knew they were going to bring everybody," Wilson said.

Wilson finished 9 of 18 for a career-low 103 yards. His leading receiver was Harvin, making his second appearance of the season after nearly getting put on injured reserve less than two weeks ago. Harvin had three receptions for 21 yards in the first half and one rush for 9 yards, but left the game late in the first half with a concussion.

Carroll said they won't know Harvin's status for the NFC championship game until later in the week as he goes through the league's concussion protocol.

"He was electric. He made some awesome plays today," Wilson said about Harvin. "... They were trying to find ways to stop him and they were struggling with that."

Hauschka hit field goals of 38 and 49 yards with the windy, rainy conditions at his back and hit a 26-yarder into the wind late in the third quarter.

Brees finished 24 of 43 for 309 yards and scared Seattle in the closing seconds. Brees took the Saints 80 yards in nine plays, capped with a 9-yard TD pass to Marques Colston with 26 seconds left that made it 23-15.

Colston then recovered the onside kick when it caromed off Tate's and directly to the Saints' receiver.

Brees took over at his 41 with 24 seconds left and Jimmy Graham caught his first pass of the game on an 8-yard completion. Brees spiked the ball to stop the clock, then found Colston near the sideline. Instead of stepping out of bounds, Colston tried to throw across the field to Darren Sproles. It was an illegal forward pass and the penalty ran off the final 10 seconds of the clock giving Seattle the victory.

Seattle's defense also made Graham invisible for the second time this season. He had just three receptions in the first meeting in December and was even less of an option on Saturday.

"We're not scared of him," Seattle cornerback Richard Sherman said. "We have to deal with him but he has to deal with us."

Graham's lack of production was just part of the Saints struggles, especially in the first half. New Orleans was shut out in the first half for the third time in Sean Payton's tenure as head coach and first since 2011. Brees was held to 34 yards passing in the half.

There was also Mark Ingram's costly fumble on the first play of the second quarter that was forced and recovered by Michael Bennett. Two plays later, Lynch danced in for his first touchdown and the Seahawks had a 13-0 lead.

"It's my responsibility to take care of the football," Ingram said. "I lost it in a critical moment and they scored a touchdown off of it. That was huge."

Smith's bank shot lifts Pistons over Suns, 110-108



AUBURN HILLS, Mich. (AP)—Josh Smith's driving, left-handed bank shot with 1.2 seconds left gave the Detroit Pistons a 110-108 win over the Phoenix Suns on Saturday night.

Smith was involved in a few big plays in the final half-minute—both good and bad. His 3-pointer as the shot clock expired put Detroit ahead 108-105 with 26.8 seconds left. Then he fouled Gerald Green while the Phoenix guard was shooting a 3-pointer. Green made all three free throws to tie it with 4.3 seconds remaining.

Smith took the ensuing inbounds pass near the top of the key, drove to the right and then switched hands, making a tough shot while being tightly defended by Channing Frye.

Green's shot at the buzzer from in front of the Detroit bench missed badly.

Smith finished with 25 points, and Brandon Jennings had eight points, 18 assists and eight rebounds for Detroit. Greg Monroe added 20 points and 12 rebounds.

Frye led Phoenix with 21 points.

The Suns tied the game with a 13-3 run to start the fourth quarter, but Detroit responded with a 7-0 run. It was 105-97 before Phoenix scored eight straight points, tying it on a 3-pointer by PJ Tucker with 51.2 seconds left.

The Pistons barely got a shot off on their next possession, but Smith was able to free himself on the left wing and connect from 3-point range.

Jennings equaled team records held by Isiah Thomas with 11 assists in the first quarter and 16 in the first half. His final total of 18 is the highest by an NBA player this season.

Detroit has been a disappointment after signing Smith and trading for Jennings in the offseason, but those two looked sharp for most of the night Saturday. In the first quarter, the Pistons looked as smooth and cohesive as they have all season, repeatedly beating the transition-oriented Suns down the court for easy baskets.

Jennings tossed an alley-oop off the backboard to Andre Drummond for a 12-3 lead, and later in the quarter his alley-oop to Smith gave him 10 assists. Jennings then found Kyle Singler for a dunk that made it 35-19.

The Pistons finished the quarter with 16 assists on 17 field goals - and a 35-21 lead.

Even when Jennings shot an airball at the end of the second quarter, Drummond was there to tip it in at the buzzer for a 64-51 lead. Detroit had 50 points in the paint in the first half.

The last player with 16 assists in a half was Jason Kidd, who did it April 5, 2009, for Dallas, according to STATS. That was also against Phoenix.

The last player with at least 11 assists in a quarter was Steve Blake, who had 14 for Portland in 2009.

Phoenix was without guard Eric Bledsoe, who had surgery Friday on his right knee.

Rockets 114, Wizards 107

In Washington, Houston built a 25-point lead, lost all of it, then rallied from five down late in the fourth quarter to defeat Washington in a game twice delayed by leaks in the roof.

Long after the stoppages of 35 and 22 minutes because the leaks, James Hardin tied the game with a driving layup with 2:33 to play, then gave the Rockets the lead again—this time for good—with a three-point play with 1:54 remaining. He finished with 25 points for the Rockets, who made only four field goals in the final period yet closed with a 17-5 run.

John Wall led Washington's comeback and finished with 23 points and 10 assists, Trevor Ariza had 23 points and 14 rebounds, and Kevin Seraphin—another catalyst in Washington's surge—had all of his season-high 18 points in the second half. The Wizards lost their fourth straight home game and fell to 2-14 against teams that are currently .500 or better.

Trail Blazers 112, Celtics 104

In Portland, Oregon, LaMarcus Aldridge had 21 points and 13 rebounds to help Portland hand Boston its eighth straight loss.

The Trail Blazers rallied from a 10-point second-quarter deficit. Wesley Matthews scored 18 points and Nicolas Batum had 16. Damian Lillard and Robin Lopez each had 15 points. Lopez also had 13 rebounds.

The win kept Portland tied for first place with Oklahoma City in the Northwest Division.

Avery Bradley led Boston with 25 points. The Celtics, who have lost 11 of 12, shot 62 percent during the first half, but only 34 percent after halftime.

Jared Sullinger had 14 points and 10 rebounds for Boston. Sullinger scored 26 points when the two teams played at Boston in November.

Mavericks 110, Pelicans 97

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-high 40 points as Dallas recovered from a cold start to beat New Orleans for the second time in as many days.

Nowitzki scored 20 points in the third quarter and hit seven straight shots after starting 2 of 9 from the field.

Monta Ellis broke a 99-all tie with two free throws, and Nowitzki hit three more after getting fouled on a 3-pointer by Jason Smith.

Anthony Davis had 28 points and 14 rebounds for the Pelicans, who lost their fifth straight and dropped six games below .500, both season highs.



Detroit Pistons forward Josh Smith (6) takes a shot against Phoenix Suns guard Ish Smith (3) and forward Channing Frye (8) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, Jan. 11, 2014, in Auburn Hills, Mich.

Knicks 102, 76ers 92

In Philadelphia, Amare Stoudemire scored 21 points and Carmelo Anthony added 18 to lead New York over Philadelphia.

J.R. Smith returned from a one-game benching for unsportsmanlike conduct and contributed 11 points for the Knicks (14-22), who have won four straight. Anthony added nine rebounds and seven assists. Stoudemire went 8 for 10 from the field.

Spencer Hawes and James Anderson each had 17 points to lead the Sixers (12-25). Thaddeus Young chipped in 15 points for Philadelphia, losers of four in a row.

Raptors 96, Nets 80

In Toronto, DeMar DeRozan scored 26 points, Patrick Patterson had 14 points and 12 rebounds as Toronto ended Brooklyn's five-game winning streak.

Terrence Ross scored 14

points, John Salmons had 13 and Kyle Lowry finished with 12 as Toronto won for the seventh time in nine games.

Paul Pierce scored 15 points and Alan Anderson had 13 for the Nets, whose season-long winning streak came to an end one night after a double-overtime victory over Miami.

Joe Johnson scored 11 for the Nets, who fell to 1-6 this season in the second game of a back-to-back.

Chris Kirk moves into the lead at Sony Open

HONOLULU (AP)—Will Wilcox finally got around to making his debut as a PGA Tour rookie and was surprised as anyone to be in the final group at the Sony Open.

As for Chris Kirk and Harris English, it's no surprise at all.

Kirk got up-and-down from a bunker on the par-5 18th by making a 10-foot birdie putt for a 5-under 65, giving him a one-shot lead going into the final round of a Sony Open that remains up for grabs among at least a dozen players.

Cloudy conditions and only a gentle, Pacific breeze kept everyone in the mix Saturday at Waialae, even John Daly.

And even Wilcox.

The 27-year-old from Alabama made birdie on his last two holes for a 64 and was one shot behind. Wilcox once qualified for the Canadian Open in 2010, and for the U.S. Open in 2011 at Congressional. He finally made it to the big leagues by finishing 10th on the Web.com

Tour money list, although he didn't play in the Web.com Tour Finals or in the fall for what he only said were "unfortunate, personal things."

And here he is.

"I didn't know what was going to happen this week," Wilcox said. "Making the cut was a dream come true. Playing good on Saturday was a dream come true. Getting to have a decent shot tomorrow is ridiculous. We'll see."

Kirk, who was at 12-under 198, won the McGladrey Classic in November, his final tournament of 2013 before taking time off for the birth of his second child. He returned at Kapalua and shook off some rust. And while he closed with a 73 at Kapalua, it was a good day of scrambling and gave him a small measure of momentum on Oahu.

English, who had a 67, won the final event of 2013 in the

OHL Classic at Mayakoba. He goes for his third win in his last 16 starts on the PGA Tour.

"It was just kind of 'Grind it til you find it.' This course is tough," English said. "It's hard to hit the fairways, and you've just got to be a wizard around the greens, and that's kind of how I approached today. I didn't have my best golf, but I scraped it around at 3-under par and I'm still in this golf tournament."

So is everyone else it would seem.

At one point there was a six-way tie for the lead. An hour later, 14 players were separated by a single shot.

Daly matched the low score of the third round with a 64 and was five shots behind. Masters champion Adam Scott wasn't making up any ground, dropped two shots late in his round and finished with a two-putt birdie for a 71 and was two

Bulls 103, Bobcats 97

In Chicago, D.J. Augustin had 20 points and 12 assists and Joakim Noah added 19 points and 14 rebounds to help streaking Chicago beat Charlotte for its fifth straight victory and improve to 3-0 since trading All-Star Luol Deng to Cleveland on Monday.

Mike Dunleavy scored 17 points for the Bulls, who had seven players score in double figures and recovered after blowing a 15-point lead in the second half. Carlos Boozer had 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Gerald Henderson scored 30 points and Kemba Walker had 29 for the Bobcats, who have dropped three straight.

Thunder 101, Bucks 85

In Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 33 points after missing his first eight shots and Serge Ibaka added 17 points and 17 rebounds to help Oklahoma City beat Milwaukee to end a two-game losing streak.

Jeremy Lamb added 17 points for the Thunder, who had lost four of six. Oklahoma City scored just 14 points in the first quarter and 38 in the first half before heating up and hitting 63 after the break.

O.J. Mayo and Luke Ridnour scored 16 points apiece and Giannis Antetokounmpo had 13 points and 11 rebounds for the Bucks (7-29), who have the league's worst record.

Nuggets 120, Magic 94

In Denver, Kenneth Faried had 17 points and nine rebounds, and Randy Foye and Evan Fournier scored 18 points each as Denver beat Orlando for its fifth straight victory after losing eight in a row.

shots behind.

A dozen players were separated by three shots going into Sunday, a group that includes Kapalua winner Zach Johnson as he tries to become the first player since Ernie Els in 2003 to sweep the Hawaii swing.

The plan for all the contenders is to not worry about anyone else because there would be too many players to worry about.

"When it's so close like that, everybody is going to be making some birdies here and there," Kirk said. "So I probably won't look at leaderboards as much as I normally would. A lot of courses I think lend themselves to you need to know what your position is going into any given hole, but out here, I don't think that's really the case. They're just so volatile with guys making birdies and bogeys."

"I'll just probably try to keep my head down and make as many birdies as I can."



A-Rod banned for 2014 season, arbitrator rules

NEW YORK (AP)—Alex Rodriguez was dealt the most severe punishment in the history of baseball’s drug agreement when an arbitrator ruled the New York Yankees third baseman is suspended for the entire 2014 season as a result of a drug investigation by Major League Baseball.

The decision by arbitrator Fredric Horowitz on Saturday cut the suspension issued Aug. 5 by baseball Commissioner Bud

Selig from 211 games to this year’s entire 162-game regular-season schedule plus any post-season games. The three-time American League Most Valuable Player will lose just over \$22 million of his \$25 million salary.

Rodriguez vowed to continue his fight in federal court to reverse the decision.

“It’s virtually impossible. The arbitration will stand. I think it’s almost inconceivable that a

federal court would overturn it,” said former baseball Commissioner Fay Vincent, a graduate of Yale Law School. “The arbitration is itself an appeal from the commissioner’s judgment. How many appeals do you go?”

Rodriguez is the most high-profile player ensnared by baseball’s drug rules, which were first agreed to in 2002 as management and union attempted to combat the use of

steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs. In sustaining more than three-quarters of Selig’s initial penalty, Horowitz’s decision will be widely viewed as a victory for the 79-year-old Selig, who has ruled baseball since 1992 and says he intends to retire in January 2015.

A 14-time All-Star, Rodriguez has been baseball’s highest-paid player under a \$275 million, 10-year contract. He has spent parts of the last six seasons on

the disabled list and will be 39 years old when he is eligible to return to the field in 2015. He is signed with the Yankees through the 2017 season.

Rodriguez admitted five years ago he used performance-enhancing drugs while with Texas from 2001-03 but has denied using them since. He already sued MLB and Selig in October, claiming they are engaged in a “witch hunt” against him.

“The number of games sadly comes as no surprise, as the deck has been stacked against me from day one,” Rodriguez said in a statement. “This is one man’s decision, that was not put before a fair and impartial jury, does not involve me having failed a single drug test, is at odds with the facts and is inconsistent with the terms of the

Joint Drug Agreement and the Basic Agreement, and relies on testimony and documents that would never have been allowed in any court in the United States because they are false and wholly unreliable.”

The Major League Baseball Players Association had filed a grievance last summer saying the discipline was without “just cause.”

The 65-year-old Horowitz, a California-based lawyer who became the sport’s independent arbitrator in 2012, heard the case over 12 sessions from Sept. 30 until Nov. 21. Technically, he chaired a three-man arbitration panel that included MLB Chief Operating Officer Rob Manfred and union General Counsel Dave Prouty. The written opinion was not made public.

LEE

From Page 28

ton of Tahiti. Lee prevailed new, 6-0, 6-1, for a semis date against the third-seeded Hana Kim. The CNMI junior player went on to stun another ranked foe, sweeping Kim in the semifinals, 6-0, 6-2.

In the other semis tiff, Gilmour, who eliminated Imogen Cameron and Charlie Hargreaves in her first two matches, ousted sixth-ranked Hayla Rafei, 6-3, 6-1, to have a second

crack at Lee. However, Gilmour failed to avenge her loss to Lee in New South Wales and settled for another bridesmaid finish.

Meanwhile, Lee also triumphed in the doubles event, teaming up with Kim in beating the second-seeded Portela and Mia Repac in the finals, 6-4, 6-0.

Lee and Kim made it to the finals after nailing two victories over the weekend. Again, Lee frustrated Gilmour, who partnered with Angelina Teakaraanga, as the CNMI bet and

her teammates booted out their seeded foe in the quarterfinals, 6-1, 6-1. The Lee and Kim duo then showed the exit door to another ranked pair, beating No. 4 picks Mia Savio and Amy Stevens in the semifinals of the upper bracket, 6-1, 6-1.

In the lower bracket semis, Repac and Portela won over Charlie Hargreaves and Rafei, 6-4, 7-5, to earn the right to challenge Kim and Lee in the finals. The first set of the title game was a back-and-forth match with Lee and Kim win-

HULA

From Page 28

sion, Rollers 1 bagged two wins over the weekend to gain a playoff berth.

Rollers 1 edged Rollers 4 in overtime last Friday, 81-80, and then slipped past Dream Team last Saturday, 68-63, to improve to a 5-1 record and tie Rollers 3 in the lead. Rollers 4 fell to a 2-3 card in the double-round robin elimination, pending the result of its game against Rollers 2 last night, while Dream Team is still winless in five games.

In the Rollers 1 versus Rollers 4 tiff, the former got

one field goal each from five different players to pull off the 1-point win. J.P. Iglecias, Prince Factor, Irvin Malonzo, and Mike Arciaga made the first four baskets for Rollers 1 in the extension period, while Winson Yu nailed the go-ahead one. Only three Rollers 4 players lit up the board in overtime and the team also canned only three field goals and two charities.

Against Dream Team, Malonzo scored 4 of Rollers 1’s last 8 points to lift his team to the 5-point win. He finished with 10 points, joining two other teammates on the list of double figure scor-

ers in last Saturday’s first match. Kanata Omori led Rollers 1 in scoring with his 18, while Arciaga contributed 14.

Irish Pagarao had 17 for Dream Team, which got 10 markers from Kyla Ito.

SATURDAY First Game

Rollers 1 68 – Omori 18, Arciaga 14, Malonzo 10, Factor 8, Camacho 5, Pangelinan 4, Ano 4, Iglecias 2, Yu 2.

Dream Team 63 – Pagarao 17, Ito 10, I. Palero 9, Alegre 9, Abrams 8, Travilla 6, Pena 2.

Scoring by halves: 32-31, 68-63.

first period. Kagman built the double-digit spread behind the hot shooting of Santos and good ball movement.

The Manta Rays then mounted a comeback in the second quarter with Javier asserting his might in the paint. By the end of the first half, the match was back to square one, 38-all, and Southern even managed to take the lead in the third with Emerson Feria taking charge from Javier in the shaded lane. However, the Rays failed to keep their momentum, as coach Ed Guinto shuffled his men quickly, taking them out of their rhythm.

In contrast, Kagman stuck with Santos and its four other starters, making only limited, but timely substitutions. Coach Chris Tenorio’s ploy worked, as the Ayuyus turned on the heat midway in the third to gain cushion in the closely fought fourth canto.

Meanwhile, Kagman also had a tough win in the junior varsity game, eking out a 38-35 victory.

Mike Muna top-scored in Ayuyus’ victory, making 20 points. He nailed 4 of the

Second Game

Hula Girls 67 – Travilla 26, Javier 13, Pagarao 10, Pena 9, I. Palero 5, J. Palero 2.

Futball 44 – Pablo 12, Rasguiy 11, Lopez 6, Castillo 6, Phan 4, Enriquez 4, Minor 3, Lumabi 2.

Scoring by halves: 30-20, 67-44.

FRIDAY

Rollers 1 81 – Arciaga 25, Factor 19, Ano 10, Malonzo 10, Iglecias 6, Omori 4, Yu 4.

Rollers 4 80 – Kwon 33, Deocares 13, Ellama 13, Sagun 10, Iba 4, Santos 3, Bucayo 2.

Scoring by halves: 30-26, 71-71, 81-80.

squad’s 6 points in the fourth quarter, including two important free throws that iced it for Kagman. Muna also dropped team’s final 8 markers in the third period for their 32-26 advantage. Southern tried to recover behind the successive baskets of Harley Warren in the fourth, but Muna countered with rally halting free throws. Kagman got its last three points from the 15-foot line.

First Game

KHS 38 – Muna 20, Jones 10, Retan 3, Lampkin 3, Teno-rio 2.

SSHS 35 – Warren 20, Anderson 6, Taitano 5, Kapileo 2, Bondoc 2.

Scoring by quarters: 7-9, 20-15, 32-26, 38-35.

Second Game

KHS 91 – Jo. Santos 46, Lampkin 19, Sakisat 14, J. Santos 6, Salas 5, Evangelista 2.

SSHS 87 – Javier 22, Feria 19, Kintaro 12, Palacios 11, Raquero 8, A. Deleon Guerrero 5, Borromeo 4, Castro 3, J. Deleon Guerrero 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-11, 38-38, 71-57, 91-87.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES			
NBA STANDINGS			
EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Toronto	18	17	.514 —
Brooklyn	15	22	.405 4
New York	14	22	.389 4½
Boston	13	25	.342 6½
Philadelphia	12	25	.324 7
Southeast Division			
Miami	27	10	.730 —
Atlanta	20	17	.541 7
Washington	16	19	.457 10
Charlotte	15	23	.395 12½
Orlando	10	27	.270 17
Central Division			
Indiana	29	7	.806 —
Chicago	17	18	.486 11½
Detroit	16	22	.421 14
Cleveland	13	23	.361 16
Milwaukee	7	29	.194 22
WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Southwest Division			
San Antonio	28	8	.778 —
Houston	24	14	.632 5
Dallas	22	16	.579 7
Memphis	16	19	.457 11½
New Orleans	15	21	.417 13
Northwest Division			
Portland	28	9	.757 —
Oklahoma City	28	9	.757 —
Denver	19	17	.528 8½
Minnesota	18	18	.500 9½
Utah	12	26	.316 16½
Pacific Division			
L.A. Clippers	26	13	.667 —
Golden State	25	14	.641 1
Phoenix	21	15	.583 3½
L.A. Lakers	14	23	.378 11
Sacramento	12	22	.353 11½
SONY OPEN SCORES			
HONOLULU (AP) — Scores Saturday from the \$5.6-million Sony Open, played on the par-70, 7,044-yard Waialae Country Club			
THIRD ROUND			
Chris Kirk	64-69-65-198		
Will Wilcox	69-66-64-199		
Harris English	66-66-67-199		
Jerry Kelly	67-67-66-200		
Jimmy Walker	66-67-67-200		
Jeff Overton	68-68-65-201		
Robert Allenby	68-68-65-201		
Retief Goosen	66-69-66-201		
Pat Perez	68-67-66-201		
Zach Johnson	68-67-66-201		
Brian Stuard	65-65-71-201		
Hideto Tanihara	66-65-70-201		
John Peterson	68-69-65-202		
Brendon Todd	70-66-66-202		
Jason Dufner	67-68-67-202		
Ryan Palmer	65-70-67-202		
Marc Leishman	67-64-71-202		
Heath Slocum	69-69-65-203		
Justin Leonard	68-66-69-203		
Hudson Swafford	70-64-69-203		
Greg Chalmers	68-66-69-203		
Matt Every	69-65-69-203		
Chris Stroud	68-65-70-203		
Sang-Moon Bae	63-70-70-203		
John Daly	66-73-64-203		
Jason Kokrak	66-67-70-203		
Kevin Na	70-67-67-204		
Spencer Levin	69-69-66-204		
Stewart Cink	69-69-66-204		
Tyrone Van Aswegen	69-69-66-204		
Matt Kuchar	68-68-68-204		
Hyung-Sung Kim	70-68-66-204		
Ben Martin	67-69-68-204		
Ryuji Imada	67-69-68-204		
Tim Herron	68-70-66-204		
Charles Howell III	71-67-66-204		
Brian Harman	69-66-69-204		
Boo Weekley	67-67-70-204		
Adam Scott	67-66-71-204		
David Hearn	68-70-67-205		
Ricky Barnes	68-69-68-205		
Billy Hurley III	67-69-69-205		
Seung-Yul Noh	70-66-69-205		
Brice Garnett	67-71-67-205		
Tim Wilkinson	71-67-67-205		
K.J. Choi	67-69-69-205		
Y.E. Yang	73-66-66-205		
Michael Putnam	70-68-68-206		
Derek Tolan	70-66-70-206		
James Hahn	67-68-71-206		
Chad Collins	71-67-68-206		
Brian Gay	71-68-67-206		
Robert Streb	70-69-67-206		
D.A. Points	70-69-67-206		
John Rollins	69-68-70-207		
Russell Henley	73-65-69-207		
Daniel Summerhays	66-71-70-207		
Steven Bowditch	72-66-69-207		
Mark Wilson	68-68-71-207		
Charlie Beljan	68-70-69-207		
John Senden	72-67-68-207		
William McGirt	67-72-68-207		
Charlie Wi	69-70-68-207		
Morgan Hoffmann	68-69-71-208		
Peter Malnati	69-69-70-208		
Paul Goydos	74-64-70-208		
Justin Hicks	69-69-70-208		
Scott Brown	71-67-70-208		
Brendon de Jonge	68-71-69-208		
Stuart Appleby	70-68-71-209		
Tommy Gainey	72-67-70-209		
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS			

The Week in Sports

3 sports share spotlight

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tennis, basketball, football stories put some life to the slow week in CNMI sports, as athletes tried to regain their competitive form after the holiday break.

In tennis, the CNMI had three players who competed in two tournaments in Australia. Carol Lee went on to hand the Commonwealth two championship trophies after winning the girls U12 singles events in the 2014 Australia Post Margaret Court Cup in New South Wales and the 2014 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships in Victoria. Other CNMI players who participated in the tournaments in the Land Down Under were Christopher Cajigan and Michael Ren.

In basketball, the 2013-2014



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Two Astig Futsal, left, and Fake Madrid players battle for possession during their title game in the Saipan Soccer School league last week at the TSL Sports Complex.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Saipan Southern High School's Tyler Palacios picks up a loose ball during their varsity game against Kagman High School in the MISO caging last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Marianas High School player drives against Agape Christian School defenders during their ninth grade game in the MISO caging last week at the MHS Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Two Astig Futsal players in action against only one Foot Loose defender during their game in the Saipan Soccer School league last week at the TSL Sports Complex.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Rollers 1 player goes up for a running jumper against Rollers 4 defenders during their game in the Sun Palace caging last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League kicked off at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. The MHS Dolphins went on to sweep the opener, winning the varsity division and the ninth grade (freshmen) matches against Eucon International School and Agape Christian School, respectively, last Wednesday.

Kagman High School also recorded twin wins, defeating Saipan Southern High School in the varsity and junior varsity games last Friday.

Still in basketball, the 2013 Sun Palace Christmas Basketball Tournament continued with its elimination game at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium. Rollers 1 and 3 bagged wins to share the top spot in the

boys division, while Hula Girls is in the No. 1 spot with its 5-0 record.

In football, action in the M-League continued with Korean Football Association, Inter Godfather's and Shirley's FC notching separate wins at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Over at the TSL Sports Complex, Astig Futsal ruled the Saipan Soccer School's 2013 U13 Co-ed Christmas Futsal Tournament after downing Fake Madrid in the finals, 2-1. In the battle for third place Foot Loose prevailed over Kanoa Mighty Orange.

In bowling, Yho Villavicencio was crowned Budweiser Queen of the Lanes after winning Saipan Bowling Association's 2013-season ending tournament.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Hula Girls' Irish Pagarao pulls up for a shot against Futball defenders during their game in the Sun Palace caging last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CMI's Michael Ren, left, and Christopher Cajigan, pose for a photo while waiting for their games in Australia last week.



Blount has 4 TD runs, Patriots top Colts, 43-22

24

Saipan Tribune Sports

Smith's bank shot lifts Pistons over Suns, 110-108

25



28 MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Lee triumphs anew in Australia



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Carol Lee, seen here competing in the North Pacific Regional Tournament on Saipan last year, won another girls U12 singles crown in Australia yesterday.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's Carol Lee reasserted her mastery over Australia's Kelly Gilmour, sweeping her top-ranked foe in the girls U12 singles finale in the 2014 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships yesterday at the Wodonga Tennis Centre in Victoria, Australia.

Lee notched a 6-3, 6-5 victory in the championship game last weekend to bag her second singles crown. The first singles plum came from the 2014 Australia Post Margaret Court Cup in New South Wales and was incidentally courtesy of a finals win against Gilmour, 6-1, 6-2.

The Commonwealth bet and the Australian netter arranged their finals rematch after top-

ping the lower and upper bracket of the 23-player main draw.

In the bottom half of the draw, Lee did not drop a single set to bag a finals berth. She blanked Chloe Smith in the first round, 6-0, 6-0, and then stunned the second-ranked Caitlyn Portela in the

second round, 6-1, 6-4, to march into the quarterfinals against fellow Pacific Oceania Junior ITF Touring Team player Naia Guit-

See LEE on Page 26



Kagman slips past Southern



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kagman High School's Jason Lampkin, center, beats Saipan Southern High School's Anthony Deleon Guerrero, left, and Jun Javier for the rebound during the third quarter of their varsity game in the MISO caging last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Kagman High School survived its opening assignment in the varsity division of the 2013-2014 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League after edging Saipan Southern High School, 91-87,

last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Jonathan Santos led the Ayuyus' debut win, as he sizzled for 46 points and went 5-for-6 from the foul line in the closing seconds to help Kagman withstand Southern's repeated comeback bids. Santos made his first two charities af-

See KAGMAN on Page 26



Hula Girls nears sweep



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Hula Girls' Jan Travilla eludes her defenders for a reverse layup during the fourth quarter of their game against Futball in the Sun Palace caging last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hula Girls extended its winning run in the 2013 Sun Palace Christmas Basketball Tournament after outclassing Futball, 67-44, last Saturday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Hula Girls now holds a 5-0 record, one win away from sweeping the double round-robin regular season. It's last game will be against Wrecking Balls (4-1) on Wednesday and a victory would give Hula Girls the No. 1 spot in the playoffs and a date with the fourth and last-ranked team in the girls division.

Jan Travilla towed Hula Girls to the 23-point victory behind her outside shooting. The Mount Carmel School standout fired 26 points, drilling 18 of her markers from downtown. Marie Javier and Irish Pagarao also

finished in twin digits, adding 13 and 10, respectively.

Travilla scored the last basket in the first half with her second triple of the night, lifting Hula Girls to a 30-20 halftime advantage. Then in the second half, the Hula Girls gunner nailed 7 of the team's first 9 points to widen the gap further. Joana Palero logged the other 2

points off two charities. Travilla slowed down midway in the second half before connecting on three straight triples in the last five minutes of the one-sided match.

With the loss, Futball dropped to a 1-4 record and needs to win its last game against Tappers tonight to avoid being paired against Hula Girls in the semifinals. Diane Pablo top-scored in Futball's fourth loss with her 12 markers, while Negahr Rastguay chipped in 11.

Meanwhile, in the boys division
See HULA on Page 26

